Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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FBIS-NES-94-006 *10 January 1994*

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Arab-Israeli Talks

PLO, Israeli Delegates Preview Talks in Taba

Sha'th: Agreement Possible in 2 Weeks

TA0801073994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Speaking on the eve of the resumption of the Taba talks, Dr. Nabil Sha'th, the head of the Palestinian delegation, estimates that it will be possible to reach and formulate a detailed agreement within the two weeks allocated for the negotiations. Sha'th said that for all intents and purposes both parties have already agreed on most of the issues: the timetable for the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] withdrawal; the size of the Palestinian police force; security along the borders, on the roads, and inside the territories; and a safe passageway between the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

In an interview with our correspondent Moti Amir, Nabil Sha'th said that there were still disagreements on the issues of Jericho and the border crossings, on the security zones around the settlements, and also with regard to the division of responsibilities between the Palestinian towns and the Jewish settlements on matters of mutual concern.

As for the crisis in the Cairo talks, Sha'th says the whole affair was an unnecessary furor caused by premature announcements. Sha'th said that if the crisis had been put off for another week, the Palestinian and Israeli teams might have signed the agreement that they had already almost completed.

22 Feb IDF Gaza Pullout Denied

TA0801183494 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Israel and the PLO agreed over the weekend that the Taba talks will be held continuously, until an agreement is reached. The talks will be held in a special wing [of the Taba Hilton Hotel] which will be closed to the media. Political sources said this evening that if the PLO brings up for the discussion the issue of border crossings, Israel will be willing to deal with only cosmetic matters, and not with Israel's responsibility in principle over the crossings.

The prime minister's bureau this evening made haste to deny the remarks of Tzomet Knesset Member Eli'ezer Zandberg that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] withdrawal from the Gaza Strip will begin on 22 February.

Sha'th on Talks 'Without Preconditions'

NC0901113494 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1036 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 9 Jan (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, has emphasized that Egypt's support for the Palestinian negotiating delegation has been and will remain strong. He noted that President Husni Mubarak and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa are making major efforts to support the Palestinian delegation.

Sha'th left Cairo today for Taba to attend the Gaza-Jericho talks. In a departure statement, he said that the Palestinian delegation will negotiate without preconditions, except for its commitment to the Declaration of Principles signed with Israel, and it will capitalize on the progress made in the talks held during the past three months.

The Gaza-Jericho Committee will resume its meetings in Taba tomorrow, Monday, between the Palestinian side led by Dr. Sha'th and the Israeli side led by Assistant Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq.

Sha'th said the aim of the talks is to reach an agreement with the Israeli side on all contentious issues, which would allow the agreement to be implemented in the next three weeks. He added: We believe that this period is enough, provided that there is goodwill on the Israeli side. If we manage to conclude an agreement quickly, there will be a chance for a meeting between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to sign and begin implementing the agreement.

Sha'th, Palestinians Hold Meeting

NC0901170294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1530 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Taba, 9 Jan (MENA)—The Palestinian-Israeli committee concerned with implementing the Gaza-Jericho accord will begin meeting in Taba tomorrow. The Palestinian side will be headed by Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat. The Israeli delegation will be headed by Deputy Chief of Staff General Amnon Shahaq.

The security committee and the drafting committee are scheduled to meet tomorrow. The civil committee concerned with the transfer of the self-rule powers will meet in Taba on Tuesday [11 January]. This round of talks is scheduled to continue until Friday and will resume next week on Sunday or Monday.

Dr. Sha'th held a meeting this evening with the Palestinian delegation members, who arrived in Taba this afternoon, to prepare the working papers that will be submitted to the Israeli side. Dr. Sha'th stated that the negotiations will continue for three weeks until all the steps relevant to the transfer of power to the Palestinians in Gaza and Jericho are prepared. He defined these steps as the issue of the crossings, the size of the Jericho area, and security along the sea and in the Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip. He noted that the Israeli withdrawal is scheduled to be completed before 13 April. He pointed out that postponing Israeli withdrawal after this date will be considered a violation of the Declaration of Principles.

Dr. Sha'th stressed that no agreement will be signed until after a timetable has been worked out to release the remaining Palestinian detainees in Israeli jails, noting that their number now ranges between 9,600 and 9,700. He noted that Israel's release of 101 Palestinian detainees

recently is merely a gesture of good will. He said that the Taba talks will resume because the Israeli side gave up its claims of the existence of "a Cairo document" for the negotiations, noting that during the Cairo talks six working papers were submitted, but nothing in them has been settled.

Palestinian-Israeli Talks Open in Taba 10 Jan

NC1001102394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0930 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] Taba, 10 Jan (MENA)—Palestinian-Israeli talks to implement the Palestinian self-rule agreement in Gaza and Jericho opened in Taba at 1100 today. Dr. Nabil Sha'th, adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, and Amnon Shahaq, Israeli deputy chief of staff, are heading the delegations.

The Palestinian team includes Major General 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Yahya, Kamil Mansur, Yazid Sani', Rami Sha'th, Khalid al-Qidrah, Hasan 'Asfur, Jamil al-Tarifi, Zuhdi al-Qidrah, and Muhammad Daflan.

The Israeli team includes Uzi Dayan, chief of planning at the General Staff; Ya'qov Neriah, policy adviser to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin; Zvike Shtauber, deputy chief of planning at the General Staff; and Joel Zinger, legal adviser to the Foreign Ministry.

Palestinian sources say the meetings will continue uninterrupted until Thursday or Friday morning and will resume next week; they will last three weeks.

The subcommittee discussing the transfer of autonomy power will begin its meeting in Taba tomorrow morning chaired by Zuhdi al-Qidrah.

The Palestinian delegation arrived in Taba from Cairo at noon yesterday while the Israeli delegation headed by General Shahaq arrived at 1030 today.

Tight security measures were taken inside and around the hotel and reporters were not allowed to approach the delegates.

[In a related report, Paris AFP in English at 0944 GMT on 10 January adds the following: "Israel and the PLO returned to the negotiating table at this Red Sea resort on Monday with chief Palestinian negotiator Nabil Sha'th confidently predicting an accord within three weeks.

["I don't think it will take any more than two-three weeks," Sha'th told reporters as he went into the talks seeking to iron out differences over the implementation of the September 13 autonomy agreement.

["We have to finish as soon as possible and we are ready. If there is goodwill from both sides, and I believe there is, it will be done.

["Today the purpose of the discussion will be a general review of where we are and a plan to finish in three weeks."

["Sha'th offered reporters an image of how much work remained saying if the agreement represents 100 pages only two pages still had to be completed.

["But he added: 'The most difficult issue is willingness to finish.'

["Sha'th accused Israeli Environment Minister Yosi Sarid of violating the agreement when he stated Sunday that he expected the talks to last two months.

["It is said when publicly you say it will take two months, it is violating the agreement," Sha'th charged.

["Israel delegation spokesman Colonel Ami Gluska said: 'I think Mr. Sha'th's estimations are too optimistic and the negotiations should last longer because a lot of problems remain.'

["The two delegations held a brief plenary session at the Hilton Hotel and then Sha'th and Shahaq went into a meeting alone."]

Sha'th, Shahaq Hold Private Meeting

NC1001113694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1045 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] Taba, 10 Jan (MENA)—Heads of the Palestinian and Israeli delegations to the Taba talks, Palestinian president's adviser Nabil Sha'th and Israeli Deputy Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq, held a private meeting in Taba immediately after the Israeli delegation arrived at the hotel today.

MENA learned that they discussed a plan for the negotiations in this round, which is scheduled to continue until Thursday or Friday morning and then resume in the next two weeks to reach an agreement on implementing Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho.

Members of the two delegations joined the meeting later. During the afternoon session, the delegations are due to form subcommittees to discuss the disputed issues, basically, the border crossings, the size of Jericho, and the security of the Israeli settlements. Sea, air, and road security and how to control it in accordance with the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles signed in Washington on 13 September will also be discussed.

The Civil Committee concerned with the transfer of the self-rule power, which formerly met in al-'Arish, is scheduled to open meetings in Taba on Tuesday morning.

Sha'th on Cairo Draft, Syria

NC0901122694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1120 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Taba, 10 Jan (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, has stated that the Palestinian and Israeli delegations came to Taba to draft the final agreement during the current round of negotiations, which he said is expected to continue for three weeks. [passage omitted]

Asked about Israel's claims that the so-called Cairo document is the only basis for negotiations, Dr. Sha'th said that that which is agreed upon and signed will be the basis. This was the case with the Declaration of Principles, which was initialed in Oslo, he said, noting that the Cairo draft was not signed. We must not overtake events, he said.

He explained that the Cairo document includes some disputed issues that must be resolved. But he said there are many points of agreement, which makes us hope a final agreement will be reached.

On a linkage between the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations and the upcoming summit between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton, Sha'th stressed that the summit is a contributing, not a frustrating, factor for the Palestinian-Israeli talks. We want Syria to return to the peace process armed with its right to a full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan, he said. When this happens, he added, it will reflect positively on the peace process and the Palestinian-Israeli negotiations. [passage omitted]

Sha'th denied that Jordan told the Israelis it rejects a Palestinian presence on the crossings between Jericho and the Jordanian border. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Negotiator Views Talks

JN1001130994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1030 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Interview with Hasan 'Asfur, member of the PLO delegation to the Taba talks, by 'Umar Zaydani in Taba on 10 January, carried within the "With the Midday Events" program—recorded]

[Text] [Zaydani] Mr. Hasan 'Asfur, member of the PLO delegation to the Taba talks. Let us begin with a statement made by Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres in which he says that the Taba talks are being conducted on the basis of an understanding reached in Cairo and on the basis of Dr. Nabil Sha'th's remarks on this, and not on the basis of the remarks sent by Yasir 'Arafat.

['Asfur] As a matter of fact, the joint statement issued by the Palestinian and Israeli sides to resume the negotiations in Taba states that the basis of negotiations is the Declaration of Principles signed on 13 September 1993 and the understandings reached in Cairo. Besides, the remarks sent by Dr. Nabil Sha'th to Amnon Shahaq were made by Yasir 'Arafat. Therefore, there are no personal remarks by Dr. Nabil Sha'th. These remarks represent the reservations of President Yasir 'Arafat.

[Zaydani] There is an impression that the negotiations have been going on for months, and each time we go back to the same issues: the crossings, protection of roads, the size of the Jericho area, and the transfer of civil powers. Has there been no progress?

['Asfur] The truth is that the negotiations which have been going on for around three months did not only address these issues. They also addressed all issues pertaining to the Gaza agreement, the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, and the size of the Jericho area, in all their aspects. Discussions dealt with all details. There are understandings on several issues, but the recent differences over these three points—which emerged as three major issues in the negotiations—created this impression that there has been no progress on any aspects. The truth is that this is not an accurate picture of what is going on at the negotiations. There are major and minor differences, and we are trying to overcome all difficulties. We hope to make progress that will end this long process of negotiations, which started three months ago, and to implement the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area. This is what we are seeking in the days ahead.

[Zaydani] How do you explain the variation in optimism between you and the Israeli delegation? You are talking about two or three weeks while the Israelis are talking about two or three months?

['Asfur] It is not that we have determined how long things will go on. It is an expression of the nature of our understanding of the implementation of this agreement and the translation of the protocol of Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area. We believe that with hard work and without wasting time and avoiding direct responsibility on both sides, we can reach agreement within two or three weeks maximum. This is what we will try to do, if we really want to end this long process of negotiations.

[Zaydani] Do you think that the Taba talks will be clearer, given the recent crisis that happened with the Liaison Committee in Cairo?

['Asfur] What happened in Cairo was not a crisis. It was only a misunderstanding of some of the issues during the discussions and how each side dealt with these issues. Finally, an understanding was reached to overcome what happened in Cairo. We think that the Taba talks will produce clearer answers about what happened, especially since there are understandings about some issues. We have covered a considerable distance in areas of understanding, even regarding complicated issues. We can say that during the recent negotiations, the Palestinian side has offered perceptions that give practical solutions. We hope that the Israeli side will understand the Palestinian understandings without pushing in directions which express a unilateral vision of the negotiations—something which we do not want as a negotiating party.

[Zaydani] Do you agree with Deputy Foreign Minister Dr. Yosi Beilin that the most important thing in the negotiations is the ability of the Israeli and Palestinian sides to overcome differences and reach an understanding?

['Asfur] No doubt the desire, ability, positive intentions, and abandoning the mentality of pressures to achieve instantaneous or personal gains by any party—especially if this party believes itself to be the strongest party—will make the negotiations take a positive course and achieve progress. However, if the other view prevails, using pressure through the logic of strength and weakness, then this will not enable the negotiations to achieve any results. This we do not want to happen.

[Zaydani] Will the Taba talks continue uninterrupted until agreement is reached?

['Asfur] This is what we, as a Palestinian party, want. I believe there is initial understanding with the Israeli side. We will know for sure today. We want continuous negotiations until we reach an agreement. Perhaps, there might be technical halts, on Fridays and Saturdays for religious and practical reasons, but we will try to give as much of our time to the negotiations as we can.

[Zaydani] Mr. Hasan 'Asfur, member of the Palestinian delegation to the Taba talks, thank you very much.

['Asfur] You are welcome.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Damascus Declaration Meeting Opens 9 Jan

Kuwaiti, Qatari Ministers Arrive

JN0901175494 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, Kuwait's deputy premier and foreign minister, and Ahmad Bin-Jasim Al Thani, Qatar's foreign minister, arrived in Damascus today. They were received at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', a number of top Foreign Ministry officials, the Kuwaiti ambassador in Damascus, and the Qatari charge d'affaires in Damascus.

Shaykh Sabah made a statement to a SANA correspondent. He said: We are here to attend the meeting of the eight countries that signed the Damascus Declaration and believe in the declaration's principles. These principles have three focal points: cooperation in the political, economic, and military fields.

He added: We hope that cooperation among us in the political field will increase. As for economic cooperation, we will continue discussing the agreements reached in the recent meeting held by the finance ministers. Concerning military cooperation, it is carried out on a bilateral level among the eight countries. He said: We are happy to meet in Damascus in order to renew the principles of the Damascus Declaration that were announced in Damascus.

In a statement to a SANA correspondent, Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Al Thani said: We, in Qatar, are concerned to have the Damascus Declaration as a nucleus for understanding and a new Arab order. During this meeting, we will hold discussions with the rest of the ministers on certain developments in the Arab arena as well as other developments to serve the Damascus Declaration countries and the Arab nation. He hope that the summit between President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Clinton will result in progress on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks.

Agenda Detailed

JN0901170594 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] The meeting of the foreign ministers of the Arab countries that signed the Damascus Declaration opened in Damascus this evening. During the meeting, which will continue until tomorrow, the ministers will focus on evaluating the march of the Damascus Declaration and the difficulties facing it. They will also examine practical steps to activate the principles of the declaration and implement its provisions in order to reinforce cooperation among the Damascus Declaration countries in various fields. Moreover, the ministers will discuss the international and regional situation, especially developments in the peace process in light of the anticipated summit between President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton.

9 Jan Session Reviewed

JN1001100994 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] The foreign ministers of the Damascus Declaration states will resume meetings in Damascus this morning.

These ministers began meetings yesterday evening. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' led the Syrian delegation, Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa led the Egyptian delegation, and Saudi Foreign Minister His Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal led the Saudi delegation.

The Kuwaiti delegation was led by Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; the United Arab Emirates delegation was led by Foreign Minister Rashid Bin-'Abdallah; the Omani delegation was led by Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, minister of state for foreign affairs; the Qatari delegation was led by Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamad Bin-Jasim Al Thani; and the Bahraini delegation was led by Foreign Minister Muhammad Bin-Mubarak Al Khalifah. Shaykh Fahim Bin-Sultan al-Qasimi, secretary general of the Gulf Cooperation Council, attended the meetings. Following a short break, the heads of delegations held a closed meeting.

Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' opened the meetings of the Damascus Declaration foreign ministers with a speech in which he reviewed the Declaration's march. He also reviewed the scopes of cooperation and coordination among the Declaration states and the difficulties facing this Declaration. He focused on studying the practical steps that will activate the Declaration's principles and working out a plan for the coming phase to circumvent the obstacles preventing the implementation of the Declaration's articles.

Al-Shar' also stressed the need to enhance the economic and political cooperation among the Declaration states. He also pointed to political, regional, and international issues, particularly developments of the peace process in light of the anticipated Geneva summit between President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton. The Damascus

Declaration foreign ministers expressed profound interest in both this summit and its results which will definitely be reflected on the overall situation in the region.

Following the first session of the meetings of the Damascus Declaration foreign ministers, which ended yesterday evening, Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa made a statement to reporters. He said that the meetings' atmosphere was extremely good. Emphasis was laid on implementing this Declaration and continuing the consultations and joint action, he said. Discussions were held on several matters that may put the Damascus Declaration into effect and help the Arab situation, he added.

Musa, Saudi Minister Meet on 'Sidelines'

NC0901142094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1353 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Damascus, 9 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa held consultations in Damascus this afternoon on the sidelines of the Damascus Declaration foreign ministers' conference.

Musa met with Saudi Minister of Foreign Affairs Sa'ud al-Faysal and discussed ways to develop the Damascus Declaration in light of the conditions and challenges facing the Arab nation. They also discussed the Arab and international situations and the developments in the peace negotiations.

Musa is scheduled to meet with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' before the conference of the Damascus Declaration foreign ministers begins at 1800 today.

Kuwaiti Diplomat Interviewed

NC0901095494 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Telephone interview with Ibrahim Al-Musa, Kuwaiti ambassador in Syria and member of the Kuwaiti delegation to Damascus Declaration conference, in Damascus, by Shihatah Abu-al-Majd, in Cairo, on the "Dialogue From Afar" program; date not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Abu-al-Majd] What are the main topics on the agenda of the Damascus Declaration foreign ministers' meeting in light of the current Middle East and world developments?

[Al-Musa] The ministers will discuss many issues concerning not only the Damascus Declaration signatory countries but also the entire Arab nation and this region. [passage omitted]

[Abu-al-Majd] Naturally, Kuwait will focus on one specific issue: The security in the Gulf in light of the Iraqi threats and the prisoners issue. Of course, you will stress specific issues at this meeting.

[Al-Musa] Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad has stated that all member states of the Damascus Declaration have condemned the Iraqi invasion and contributed to the liberation of Kuwait. There is nothing new to be discussed on this matter because we believe that the Damascus Declaration member states stood united against the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait. [passage omitted]

[Abu-al-Majd] Regarding the development of areas that will come under Palestinian self-rule, is Kuwait willing to contribute to this development?

[Al-Musa] If you mean the self-rule areas, we have announced that Kuwait has contributed $25 million that will be spent through international organizations and economic institutions to develop the self-rule area and the occupied territories in general.

[Abu-al-Majd] What is your stance on the Arab boycott of Israel? It is being said that some Arab countries intend to end this boycott should a new situation arise. What is Kuwait's stance on this issue?

[Al-Musa] We in Kuwait are committed to the boycott as long as all the Arab countries are. There will be no separate or unilateral stance departing from the consensus of our Arab brothers. [passage omitted]

Human Rights Body Blames Libya for Disappearance

NC0701204894 Paris AFP in English 2014 GMT 7 Jan 94

[Text] Beirut, Jan 7 (AFP)—The Arab Organisation of Human Rights accused Libya Friday [7 January] of kidnapping an opposition leader in Cairo last month and urged Egypt to pursue its efforts to determine the Libyan's fate.

The organisation, which held an extraordinary meeting in Beirut this week, said the Libyan authorities were most probably behind the abduction of Mansur al-Kikhya who vanished on December 11 in the Egyptian capital where he was attending a conference of Arab human rights group.

The organisation invited Libya in a statement distributed to the press in the Lebanese capital to "counter these suspicions based on official Libyan declarations made around this date, calling for the elimination of the opposition and killing its leaders."

The head of the Arab human rights organisation, Adib al-Jadir, told AFP that al-Qadhdhafi made such statements on December 12.

Al-Kikhya, 63, served as foreign minister under Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi in the 1970s and represented Libya at the United Nations between 1976 and 1980. He later became the leader of the main opposition movement the National Rally.

The Libyan opposition has accused the Libyan government of kidnapping al-Kikhya. Tripoli denied any involvement in the affair, saying he was a victim of a feud between opposition groups.

Friday's statement also urged Egypt to "pursue its efforts to guarantee the return of Mr. al-Kikhya."

The human rights group is a Cairo-based non-governmental organisation, founded 10 years ago with members from all over the Arab world and offices in 15 Arab cities and six European capitals.

Islamic Affairs

Islamic World League Statement on Afghanistan

LD0803184194 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1725 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Holy Mecca, 7 Jan [date as received]—The Islamic World League has expressed deep regret at the continuation of in-fighting between the Afghan leaderships, calling on them to turn toward reconstructing their country and resolving the problems of their people that were created by years of the defeated communist rule.

"In a statement released today, it emphasized the necessity to solve all internal conflicts in Afghanistan according to the principles of Islamic law, so that everyone will then be devoted to the construction of the country that was destroyed by war, and in order that the Afghan Muslim people would reap the fruits of jihad for God's cause and would set [the Afghan people] an example for others in sacrifice, selflessness, and the rise above personal disputes.

The statement saw that what was happening between the brothers in Afghanistan will leave the door wide open for the colonialist powers and the remnants of infidelity who are lying in wait for this Muslim country.

The statement recalled the expression of concern of the Constituent Council of the League, at its recently held session, over the continued armed conflicts in Afghanistan and its appeal to the warring parties to abide by the principles of Islam, to cast away personal disputes, to rise above private interest, to work toward ensuring the security, stability, and safety of the Muslim people of Afghanistan, and to seek the arbitration of neutral Muslim ulema to solve the conflict and remove its causes.

Palestinian Affairs

'Reform Delegation' Concludes Talks With PLO

PLO Reactions to Demands Reported

PM0701120294 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 6 Jan 94 p8

['Ali Salih report: "'Arafat Received Seven Demands From Palestinian 'Reform Delegation'"]

[Text] London—At dawn today, the Palestinian "reform delegation" concluded its four-day meetings with the PLO Executive Committee in Tunis. A delegation member said that "during last night's meeting, the delegation submitted seven written specific reform points and asked the Executive Committee members to take a stand on them."

The "reform delegation," which is headed by Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi and includes seven other members, represents 120 Palestinian figures from inside and outside the occupied territory who signed a document delivered to the PLO leadership last month calling on it to modernize the PLO's institutions and promote a democratic leadership that would end the decisionmaking monopoly. The member revealed that, upon returning to Amman, the delegation intends to invite the signatories of the reform document to a meeting in the Jordanian capital within the next few days to report to them on the talks. The member, who was talking to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT from Tunis, specified these points as follows:

1. Formation of a planning and consultative committee to include qualified Palestinians from all fields, especially those needed for building the national authority.
2. Formation of a committee for comprehensive national dialogue (to include Palestinian factions, figures, establishments, and other bodies) consisting of independent elements enjoying the respect of the Palestinian people with the aim of strengthening democracy.
3. Creation of a department for the development of manpower. Its task will be to identify the Palestinian people's manpower qualifications in all fields and to retrain and rehabilitate the present cadres of the PLO.
4. Creation of a national authority reference body in Gaza and Jericho from elements inside the occupied territory to fill the vacuum before and after the Israeli withdrawal until the emergence of the national authority.
5. Submission of the proposed constitution for discussion at popular level.
6. Submission of a "modern" electoral law for discussion at popular level.
7. Revival of the negotiation steering committees which supervised the negotiations.

The delegation member said that "Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat expressed reservations regarding the first point, pointing out that a planning council already exists and could be rejuvenated with the qualifications we propose." According to the member, 'Arafat is trying to find a compromise solution on that point.

On the second point, the delegation member said, 'Arafat agreed in principle to the formation of a dialogue committee, giving responsibility for it to Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi. The member added: "It can be said that 'Arafat did not agree to the formation of the kind of committee that we are calling for, one that would initiate a comprehensive dialogue with all the establishments and bodies inside and outside the occupied territory, not just a dialogue committee with only the opposition factions, to create an atmosphere of popular unity and of opposition to infighting, and to discuss points of agreement and come up with binding decisions."

In reply to a question about the positions of 'Arafat and the other PLO Executive Committee members on the other points, he said that "they were not seriously discussed in the earlier meetings. Discussion was deferred until the final

session which continued until dawn today." Asked about guarantees for the implementation of these demands, the member said: "To ensure implementation, we submitted a mechanism for the implementation of each proposal that would indicate the leadership's seriousness about its promises and would enable us to request implementation once the proposal is approved."

On the positions of the Executive Committee members, the delegation member said that seven Executive Committee members, including 'Arafat, attended the meetings and that their positions can be summed up as follows:

1. 'Ali Ishaq (Palestine Liberation Front) (Abu-al-'Abbas): He did not comment but he did show some kind of displeasure.
2. Samir Ghawshah (Popular Struggle Front): Expressed reservations about the creation of new institutions. He called instead for the reactivation of the existing institutions.
3. Mahmud 'Abbas (Abu Mazin) (Fatah): He supported the demands.
4. Faruq Qaddumi (Abu-al-Lutf) (Fatah): He did not attend the last two meetings because he was in Amman but he insisted on giving his opinion of all the points. His position was positive.
5. Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh (Fida): His position was positive.
6. Sulayman al-Najjab (People's Party): He accepted all the demands.

'Arafat 'Monopoly' Criticized

PM0701180194 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 7 Jan 94 pp 1, 4

[Muhammad 'Ali al-Qulaybi report: " 'Abd-al-Shafi Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: 'Arafat Still Monopolizing Decisions, and the Executive Committee Is Facilitating That"]

[Excerpt] Tunis—Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of the "reform delegation," has criticized the PLO and its chairman, Yasir 'Arafat. In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT made after the conclusion of the meetings he and his delegation held with the Executive Committee and before leaving Tunis for Jordan yesterday, he said that " 'Arafat is still monopolizing the decisionmaking, and I believe that the Executive Committee members are making it easy for him to continue to do so by accepting that he is the decisionmaker."

Reacting to the fact that some committee members had reaffirmed opposition to 'Arafat's decisionmaking monopoly, 'Abd-al-Shafi said that "in practical terms they are all in the same boat and do not dare to reveal their positions."

Palestinian sources in Tunis had said yesterday that 'Arafat and the PLO Executive Committee made some concessions regarding some of the reform demands submitted in writing by the delegation to the Executive Committee at dawn yesterday.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi warned, however, that if 'Arafat did not carry out what was outlined in the reform memorandum then there would again be recourse to the PLO's legitimate institutions, "and after that we would seek the verdict of the masses." He added that there was an inclination to submit that memorandum to the Palestine Central Council.

In his statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 'Abd-al-Shafi said that he expected 'Arafat to appeal to the Palestinian opposition for the start of a broad national dialogue and then, subsequent to the appeal, make incessant efforts to persuade the opposition to participate in that broad dialogue.

He added: "At any rate, we have clearly conveyed to President 'Arafat and the Executive Committee the Palestinian masses' insistence on and expectation of democratic decisions. The leadership must give this matter the necessary consideration if we do not want to face more problems, because in the absence of democratic practices and a democratic approach partisan and ideological disputes would intensify and could develop into armed conflicts. Such disputes can only be eliminated through commitment to the principle of democracy."

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi underlined the need for a new mechanism within the PLO to help the Executive Committee apply the rules of democratic action in the future. [passage omitted]

'Abd-al-Shafi on Discussions With PLO

LD0701194294 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 7 Jan 94

[Text] At a news conference held yesterday [6 January] in Tunis, Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi [head of delegation conducting talks on democratic reform with PLO leadership] announced that brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], the president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, held four meetings with seven members of the Palestinian National Council to discuss proposals they had put forward to entrench the democratic conception and consolidate the unity of our people on the basis of political plurality and democratic practices.

We have come in response to an invitation from brother President Abu-'Ammar, he said. He added that President 'Arafat will address an appeal concerning the democratic national dialogue with all Palestinian forces and factions, and immediately afterward he ['Arafat] will begin this dialogue.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi also said: We hope this invitation will receive good responses and understanding from everyone and contribute toward the realization and entrenchment of the overall national unity.

He added: During those meetings with President 'Arafat, we emphasized the necessity to recall the qualified Palestinians in various fields to build the Palestinian objectives, a matter that requires the existence of an actual democratic practice, and this is what our memorandum stressed.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi added that the response to the proposals of the group was that some of those proposals were already in practice, and that there was a council that planned and exercised this required role. [sentence as heard] We have requested the activation of this body, and with regard to human resources, we expressed our desire to be selected according to qualifications and competence.

Concerning the Construction and Economic Development Council, the response was that there was a special bureau that was in charge of that matter.

Concerning the consultative committees within and outside the occupied territories, the response was that the national authority will be composed from people inside and outside [the occupied territories], and the authority council will undertake whatever was necessary—such as the setting up of committees and dealing with other questions, such as municipal affairs.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi stressed that during these deliberations, the need to firmly establish the democratic concept and begin the national dialogue were emphasized in order to realize comprehensive national unity.

'Abd al-Shafi: Talks 'Successful'

JN0901143294 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 9 Dec 94 pp 1, 5

[Special to the JORDAN TIMES by Wafa' 'Amr]

[Text] Amman—Chief Palestinian negotiator to bilateral talks with Israel, Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, said Saturday [8 January] that the reformists' talks with the Palestinian leadership in Tunis were "in principle successful" due to the leadership's awareness to the importance of adopting democracy.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi returned from Tunis Thursday after talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leadership. He headed a seven-member team representing 120 Palestinian officials and personalities who demanded democratic reforms within the PLO structure and an end to PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's "autocratric" decision-making style.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said that during talks with the PLO leadership and the Executive Committee, there has been a positive response to the reformists' demands and he felt satisfied with Mr. 'Arafat's support for the democratisation of the PLO.

"I would say, in principle, in terms of matters of the depth of awareness of our leadership, and of the people in general, that the importance of democratising the structure of the PLO and of adopting democracy in our political life as a whole have been supported very much by the leadership," Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi told reporters.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi held a meeting with around 60 reformists at the Palestine National Council (PNC) headquarters Saturday to brief them on the outcome of the team's trip to Tunis.

He said the results of the team's talks with the PLO leadership were "positive" and said: "Any talk about the failure of our mission or any impression given that it was negative would be inaccurate."

He said he felt there was response to the demands for reform but not all demands as stated in a statement that was signed by 120 figures and sent to the leadership last month.

"I don't see any reason why reforms would not be implemented. However, reform is a long process," he said.

He alluded to the fact that Mr. 'Arafat remains to be the only decision-maker in the PLO at this point and that the PLO's democratic institutions and collective leadership bodies remain inactive or dormant at this stage.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said the reformists submitted the statement again to the PLO leadership in Tunis and they provided it with suggestions to implement reforms and democratisation. "There was response to our demands, and the statement was endorsed by the Executive Committee, but not all demands were accepted," he added.

"Expanding the decision-making body and collective leadership cannot be done at this stage," Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said. "It is unacceptable that Abu-'Ammar ('Arafat) alone makes the decisions."

Other members of the team felt satisfied with the fact that the leadership had taken their movement seriously and accepted to open a democratic deialogue with them in order to implement changes. They are not under the illusion that reforms would immediately take place, but they hope to remain a strong force, working as an internal pressure group that would monitor the leadership's actions and continue to call for democratisation through popular pressure.

Popular insistence on carrying out elections in the occupied territories was one way of achieving change, Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said. "We will reject any delay to carrying out elections as stated in the PLO-Israel accord."

"The democratic issue is not the decision of Abu-'Ammar alone. It is a matter in which all the people should participate." he said.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said the prospective popular dialogue that will take place on a wide scale among Palestinians inside and outside the occupied territories will also have an impact on the leadership and allow for reforms. He was referring to a decision by the PLO leadership approving a dialogue between all Palestinian factions, inside and outside the framework of the PLO, to work towards uniting the Palestinian people. Mr. 'Arafat designated Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi to initiate this dialogue and Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi accepted.

Dr. 'Abd-al-shafi said that he found the spirit of the Executive Committee "not rejectionist to our calls for democratic reforms but not actively supportive. But I can say our mission was successful."

Executive Committee Statement Urges Cohesion

LD0701193294 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 7 Jan 94

["Text" of statement issued by PLO Executive Committee]

[Text] The PLO Executive Committee, out of the position of its responsibilities and continuous concern and care for our Palestinian people's higher interests and glorious struggle and holy jihad, reaffirms anew the principles of democratic dialogue, political plurality, the respect of views, and the practice of democracy. Today it addresses the sons of our Palestinian people everywhere and in all places of residence on the beloved homeland or in the areas of gathering outside it, and all its political and social forces, and all its patriotic activities and jamahiri organizations, and all our brothers in the Palestinian detachments and the nationalist personalities, in order to reaffirm anew the importance of consolidating our national unity—especially in these fateful and decisive times we are all passing through. It calls for more cohesion and unity at this great battleground and in the labor pains in which we are living and working, in order to realize the establishment of a patriotic Palestinian authority to complete the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza sector and the Jericho area as a first step along the path of retrieving the inalienable national rights of our Palestinian people and the establishment of our independent Palestinian state whose capital is Holy Jerusalem.

Now that we are about to enter, with God's permission and His assistance, a new major, important, and historic period to be characterized by the creation of the first Palestinian authority in contemporary history on the land of our beloved homeland, this requires us all to work together in order to reconstruct and rebuild the national infrastructures, institutions, and bodies at all the political, economic, social, and institutional levels.

Therefore at these crucial and historic moments, we are inviting all the national forces, factions, unions, institutions, and figures to meet and stress what brings us together and not what separates us and let those assembled adhere to the former. This should be entrenched in the minds and souls of everyone, in order to build our free and proud homeland for a people of freemen, militants, fighters, and believers. This will be a homeland of unity, light, hope, and faith which will be able to gain the trust of the people of the world who following this unique Palestinian experiment.

The PLO Executive Committee welcomes the efforts made by some brethren with a view to strengthening national unity and reinforcing the bases of the democratic process and regards these efforts as a blessed action which proves the health and vitality of the Palestinian arena and our people's determination to rally around the Palestine Liberation Organization which leads its national struggle. Therefore, the PLO Executive Committee calls on all the Palestinian brethren and factions to contribute to the enrichment of the national dialogue and its deepening in order to strengthen our capacity to complete the recovery of our inalienable national rights, including our people's right to return, self-determination, and the establishment of their independent state with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

This is the time for unity and not for disunion. This is the time for solidarity which is based on common denominators and not on elements of division. This is the time for joint action, and let amity govern our practices and our relations and what we agree on and what we disagree on. Let us come together, hand-in hand, to wage our sacred battle to build the Palestinian national entity; and let us direct our attention to the national interest of our people, our homeland, and nation within the framework of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of our people, the protector of its interests and the leader of its struggle.

The revolution will continue until victory.

Executive Committee Approves Accord With Jordan

NC0901174794 Paris AFP in English 1641 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Tunis, Jan 9 (AFP)—The PLO executive committee has approved a cooperation accord signed with Jordan and reviewed the progress of economic negotiations with Israel, PLO sources said Sunday [9 January].

The committee met overnight Saturday under the chairmanship of PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat to listen to briefings by the organisation's political department chief Faruq Qaddumi on the Jordan negotiations and Ahmad Quray', the head of the delegation holding economic talks with Israel in Paris.

The Jordan-Palestine Liberation Organisation accord, signed Friday, followed the broad outlines of a draft economic deal Amman had wanted signed.

Both sides have praised the agreement which calls for setting up Jordanian banks and using the Jordanian dinar in the occupied territories as the main currency, cooperating in trade and investing jointly in industry, agriculture, tourism, health and other domains.

The executive committee endorsed the Jordan declaration, member 'Ali Ishaq told AFP.

King Husayn had become increasingly irritated by 'Arafat's handling of the peace process and warned the PLO that he was giving it a final chance to agree on cooperation.

Stock market officials in Jordan said Sunday the accord had triggered a 3.7 percent rise in Amman's stock market activity.

The volume of exchange transactions has also registered an increase with an average of 11.3 million dinars (about 16 million dollars) per day, approaching the 1992 record of 16.5 million dollars daily. The size of exchange had been stable at around 15 million dollars per day during 1993.

The PLO executive also reviewed the latest achievements in talks held with Israel on economic cooperation, based on a report by Quray', who is also known as Abu-Ala'.

The next round of economic talks will be held Monday and Tuesday.

"We have not registered tangible progress," said a member of the PLO executive who requested anonymity.

"Any progress in the economic talks remains dependent on the evolution of the political negotiations process," Ishaq said.

The economic cooperation talks have snagged over the question of finance and money with the PLO insisting on issuing its own currency and central bank as part of the future autonomy.

Poll: Coordination With Jordan Supported

TA1001083494

[Editorial Report] Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic on 7 January on pages 1 and 7 publishes the results of a poll conducted by the paper in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip on 6 January. The poll comprised 630 respondents from all classes and ages, who were asked to answer the following two questions:

"1. Do you consider Palestinian-Jordanian coordination to be an urgent and inevitable necessity?

"Gaza Strip—yes, 55.3 percent; no, 35.8 percent; no opinion, 8.9 percent.

"West Bank—yes, 71.8 percent; no, 16.4 percent; no opinion, 11.8 percent.

"Total—yes, 63.5 percent; no, 26.1 percent; no opinion, 10.4 percent.

"2. In the event that the Palestinian leadership decides to abandon coordination with Jordan, should the Palestinian people demand that it pursue this coordination?

"Gaza Strip—yes, 45 percent; no, 46.1 percent; no opinion, 8.9 percent.

"West Bank—yes, 62.4 percent; no, 22.7 percent; no opinion, 14.9 percent.

"Total—yes, 53.7 percent; no, 34.4 percent; no opinion, 11.9 percent."

Hebron Fatah Activists Withdraw Resignations

TA0901123494 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 9 Jan 94 p 3

[Report by Yosi Torpstein]

[Excerpt] The three Fatah activists in Hebron who announced their resignations a few days ago, said Friday [7 January] that they would vacate their decision. They made the decision after talking with PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat, who promised that Force 17 in Hebron was not set up at his instruction nor that of the organization's leadership. 'Arafat blamed "an Arab intelligence apparatus" (he was apparently referring to Jordan) for setting up the body.

The activists who withdrew their resignations—Jibril al-Bakri, Dhiyab al-Sharabati, and Ihsan al-Nazir—telephoned 'Arafat Friday night in order to inform him that they resigned because of organizational deviations by the Fatah leadership, various appointments in the region, and an attempt to set up a security apparatus, Force 17. The activists said that "bad elements, which have always been outside the national consensus and constitute the remnants of the village associations, headed by Muhammad al-Nasir, are responsible for the establishment of the force.

A message sent to 'Arafat in the name of the activists in the various Fatah committees in the region was disseminated Friday. It detailed the reasons for the resignations and the demand to correct Fatah's internal situation, including the election of the organization's committees by mass conferences and democratic elections.

'Arafat made clear to the three activists his positions on the issues they raised and called on them to withdraw their resignations. He stressed that no order has been issued by any authorized body in Fatah Tunis for the establishment of "a presidential guard apparatus" or "Force 17 militias" in the territories. He said that Fatah has nothing to do with any militia or with Muhammad al-Nasir.

'Arafat told the three that a hostile Arab intelligence service is behind "the announcements about appointments and the establishment of bodies outside Fatah's legal organizational framework." He claimed that only the organizational framework that existed prior to 13 September is considered legal and binding, and that Fatah's central committee in the Hebron area would be in charge of dealing with all the attempts by others to intervene in Fatah affairs.

Despite the tension among Fatah activists in the Hebron region, a festive gathering was held in East Jerusalem by Fatah activists in the town on the occasion of the 29th anniversary of the organization's establishment, which really took place on 1 January. Activists who participated in the event said the delay was because "the Jerusalem gathering was held after similar events took place in various regions, in order to underline the fact that Jerusalem is the capital of Falastin, where the main rally was held." [passage omitted]

Vatican Recognition of Israel Said 'Catastrophe'

PM0701152094 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 5 Jan 94 p11

[Editorial: "The Catastrophe of the Vatican's Recognition of Israel"]

[Text] The Vatican's recognition of Israel and normalization of relations with it after 200 years of hostility and disagreement was a new shock for all the Arabs, particularly as that recognition was at the expense of the Arabs, their territory, and their sanctities and in the interest of Israel, its racism, and its control of the Arab territories.

As the papal envoy visits the occupied Arab territories in Palestine, the Israeli Army continues to kill innocent people with live ammunition and continues to throw more detainees in its prisons which now have 11,000 prisoners, some of them children.

We find it difficult to understand the Vatican's haste in normalizing relations with Israel and signing an agreement with it condoning its occupation of Arab territories and Judaiazation of Jerusalem. The Vatican, which refrained from taking such a step for 2,000 years, could have waited a few more years to see the outcome of the current peace efforts in the region.

We do not believe that the Christian spiritual leadership accepts the injustice, the occupation, the coercion, the confiscation of land, the building of settlement, and the prevention of family reunions.

That is why we are surprised by this eagerness to establish full diplomatic relations with an entity that commits all these excesses and violations of human rights and international laws and charters.

We could understand a Third World state establishing relations with Israel because it needed so-called aid and expertise or because it believed that Israel was the most effective channel for reaching the heart of the White House and its financial and economic aid, but we cannot understand the Vatican taking such a step. It is not a state and it does not need a mediator to reach Washington. Quite the contrary, Washington is the one that needs the pope's blessing and satisfaction. Furthermore, the Vatican is not a state seeking to expand its commercial relations and seek new markets for its products and exports.

The Vatican would not have taken such a step had the Arab situation not been at its worst and had the Palestinian people, Muslims and Christians, not been besieged by brothers before being besieged by enemies.

It is regrettable that the current state of Arab division does not encourage anyone to respect the Arabs and their causes or to take them and their interests into consideration. The picture was different when the Arabs were strong and united and when there was Arab solidarity. Others would have had to think a thousand times before taking a step that would anger any Arab state.

We hope that this fatal Vatican blow will serve as a lesson to those who are placing obstacles in the way of Arab reconciliation and restoration of Arab solidarity, because the danger of these divisions which have weakened the Arabs and shaken their world image is getting closer to their own doorsteps. The coming days will prove that they are not safe no matter how much money, arms, and Western support they have.

If the loss of Jerusalem, its Judaiaization, and the building of a belt of settlements around it to obliterate its Arab identity has not moved them, we do not believe that their state of health is sound nor that their political situation is normal to enable them to face any danger that threatens them.

The Vatican's recognition of Israel on Israeli terms is an insult to all the Arabs and Muslims without exception because the consequences of that recognition will be a catastrophe for all, without exception.

The Zionist movement, after Arab failure caused the label of racism to be lifted from it at the United Nations, is, after this major recognition of the state of Israel and its occupation of Jerusalem and the rest of the occupied territories, now ready to surge forward, expand, gain new legitimacy for its ideology, and build even larger and more dangerous alliances in the region at the expense of Arabism and all the human, cultural, and civilized values and ethics it represents.

Algeria

HAMAS To Participate in National Dialogue

LD0801234594 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Awaiting the next round of multilateral meetings, the Movement of the Islamic Society [HAMAS] announced today that it would participate in the upcoming national dialogue conference.

Mr. Mahfoud Nahnah, head of the movement, expressed his hopes in an interview published today in L'OPINION that the date of that conference would not be postponed.

On the project of the national consensus platform drawn up by the National Dialogue Commission, Mr. Mahfoud Nahnah said it contained a number of proposals put forward by parties involved in the dialogue. He stressed that, on the whole, there seemed to be an acceptable consensus even if it remained limited.

The head of HAMAS reiterated his call to include representatives from the dissolved Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] and said he considered the success of the national conference to be linked to the participation of the largest possible number of tendencies.

On the other hand, the National Constitutional Rally announced its continued participation in the next rounds of dialogue attended by all sides. The National Constitutional Rally, which is a coalition of 12 political parties, expressed in a statement the necessity of adopting dialogue as a means and method to contain the political crisis.

The rally stressed its determination to continue dialogue with the National Dialogue Commission to reach a consensus on the concord platform, and to exert all efforts to find safe ways to resolve and to contain the political crisis in the presence of all sides in the dialogue without marginalization, exclusion, outbidding, or imposed leadership.

Six Civilians Killed in Last Week

LD0801225694 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Regarding the security situation, Mohamed Belahcen, an official responsible for religious affairs in Ain Defla Province, was assassinated yesterday after the Friday prayers. The victim was 62 years old and was the imam of the Ghinali mosque in Medea.

Six civilians were assassinated last week in El Tarf, Oum El Bouaghi, and Mostaganem provinces. In El Tarf Province, three militants of the FLN [National Liberation Front] were assassinated with knives on the night of 2 January after the hunting rifles in their possession were taken from them.

In Oum El Bouaghi Province, the first deputy chairman of the executive authority of the (Ouled Hamda) municipality was assassinated the day before yesterday. Also the day before yesterday, in Mostaganem Province a retired health service employee was assassinated at the exit of the mosque in the town of Mostaganem.

Meanwhile the security authorities said that they had killed four members of armed gangs and had arrested four others in the center and east of the country.

Egypt

U.S. Senate Delegation Arrives for Talks

NC0901175894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1715 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 9 Jan (MENA)—A U.S. Senate delegation headed by Senator Richard Shelby arrived in Cairo from Damascus today for a two-day visit to Egypt. The delegation will hold talks with Egyptian officials about the Middle East peace process.

Discusses Cooperation With Mubarak

NC1001111294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1020 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 10 Jan (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received U.S. Senator Richard Shelby and the delegation accompanying him this morning. U.S. Charge d'Affaires in Cairo Edmund Hall attended.

The U.S. senator said afterward that he and President Mubarak reviewed Egypt's positive role in the Middle East. He said he informed President Mubarak that he realizes the importance of relations with Egypt for stability throughout the region.

Shelby said they discussed bilateral ties and various aspects of U.S.-Egyptian cooperation.

The meeting also dealt with expanding bilateral relations in the economic and military areas.

Musa Comments on Syrian-U.S. Summit

NC0901073794 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa will leave Cairo for Damascus today to lead Egypt's delegation to meetings of the Damascus Declaration countries' foreign ministers.

Musa said the Damascus Declaration foreign ministers will discuss the situation in the Middle East in light of developments in the peace process and the tense situation in other areas of the region.

The conferees will also discuss economic cooperation in the Middle East, follow up on the declaration's contents, and hold consultations on various issues in the region.

Commenting on the Syrian-U.S. summit scheduled to be held in Geneva in mid-January, Musa said that Egypt believes that this summit is especially important because it concerns the Syrian-Israeli track, a primary track in the peace process. He added that the issue of land for peace will

be discussed specifically and decisively at this summit, noting that the land in question is the Golan Heights, which was occupied in 1967.

The summit will also include a discussion on the concept of peace, making the meeting an important landmark in the peace process. Musa noted that the U.S. role is fundamental because the United States is the main sponsor of the peace process, which it launched in Madrid.

He said that this process is based on several guarantees and rules governed by the principle of land for peace, and therefore the U.S. role is fundamental.

Musa said Egypt attaches special importance to this summit and fully supports it. He added that President Husni Mubarak discussed this summit during his contacts with the various parties involved in the peace process.

Syrian Irrigation Minister Arrives in Cairo

NC0701135694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1335 GMT 7 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Cairo, 7 Jan (MENA)—Syrian Irrigation Minister 'Abd-al-Rahman Madani arrived in Cairo this afternoon on a five-day visit to Egypt. Madani will hold talks with Dr. 'Abd-al-Hadi Radi, minister of public works and water resources, aimed at strengthening joint cooperation between Egypt and Syria. [passage omitted]

Jordanian Ambassador Meets Musa, Views PLO

NC0801121894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1000 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 8 Jan (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met today with Jordanian Ambassador in Cairo Nayif Sa'ud al-Qadi. Al-Qadi said after the meeting that he briefed Musa on the results of the Palestinian delegation's talks with Jordanian officials in Amman.

Referring to the signing of an economic accord between Jordan and the PLO, he affirmed his country's eagerness for solid relations with the PLO, for an agreement to be reached on all topics, and for the two sides to have a common vision for the future. He noted that relations should be normal because this will serve both the Jordanian and Palestinian sides.

The ambassador said that he and Musa discussed ways to boost bilateral relations and to prepare for convening the Joint Higher Committee soon under the chairmanship of the two countries' prime ministers.

Mubarak, Ministers Discuss GATT's Impact

NC0901154894 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1315 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Cairo, 9 Jan (MENA)—At an expanded meeting with a number of ministers today, President Husni Mubarak discussed several important economic issues, primarily the GATT agreement and its impact on the Egyptian economy. This was revealed in a statement by Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif following a meeting that lasted more than two hours. The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi; Dr Kamal al-Janzuri, deputy prime minister and planning minister; Dr. Yusuf Wali, deputy prime minister and agriculture minister; and the social affairs minister, the information minister, the minister of public business sector, the finance minister, the education minister, the local administration minister, minister of state for population and family affairs, minister of state for the People's Assembly and Consultative Council affairs, the economy minister, health minister, minister of state for international cooperation; and Dr. Isma'il Hasan, governor of the Central Bank; and Dr. Zakariya 'Azmi, director of the President's Office.

Al-Sharif noted that President Mubarak heard a report on the GATT agreements that have so far been signed by 114 countries and represent 90 percent of the volume of international trade. He said that the economy minister pointed out that the GATT agreement involves three main areas: currencies, financing, and trade. Al-Sharif noted that the report touched on Egypt's membership in the agreements that were reached before the GATT agreement and the positive aspects that bolstered Egypt's national economy since these agreements were signed between 1970 and 1991. The report stressed that the agreements which Egypt joined between 1970 and 1991 were reviewed by the cabinet and the constitutional establishments. The report explained the conflict in interests between the advanced nations and the developing countries and the negative impact of the GATT agreement on the economies of these countries in the short term and the positive aspects that may be gained in the medium and long terms.

Al-Sharif pointed out that President Mubarak discussed the export policy and the impact of the GATT agreement on Egypt's export policy and on the system of export shares and the effect of the gradual cancellation of the shares system, which the GATT agreement notes will be canceled over a 10-year period. The report notes the approval in the GATT agreement of Egypt's memorandum on protecting Egypt's clothing industry and stopping exports of ready-made clothing and textiles in the early stages of the implementation of the agreement. President Mubarak also discussed the impact of the gradual abrogation of subsidies on agricultural commodities over a six-year period and its effect on the prices of food and agricultural commodities. President Mubarak stressed that the economic policies must be based on enhancing the positive aspects and drawing up plans to confront the negative effects on the Egyptian economy in accordance with future economic policies in the short, medium, and long terms. He also called for assessing the effects of canceling subsidies on agricultural commodities during these six years by the producing and exporting countries and the effects of rising prices of the commodities that Egypt imports, such as wheat. He called for drawing up economic and financial policies to address these factors.

Mubarak called for increasing Egyptian exports to the Arab and African markets by removing obstacles and facilitating

procedures for exports, particularly textiles, cotton, ready-made clothing, and other commodities. Al-Sharif noted that President Mubarak also discussed a report on the performance of the public business sector. [passage omitted]

Mubarak: National Dialogue Likely in February

NC0901072594 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] President Husni Mubarak has announced that the dialogue with all national forces that he asked for is likely to begin in the second half of February. The president said: The situation in Egypt is much better when compared to other countries, especially as we implement economic reforms that we consider to be in the best interests of most of our citizens.

In an exclusive interview with MAYU, he said that the state is eager to protect national industry in every way. He urged Egypt's youth not to be misled by calls of perversion, no matter what the temptation. He also urged the Arab brothers to close the files of the past and look to the future in a spirit of optimism, solidarity, and cooperation.

NDP, Opposition Parties Discuss Dialogue

NC0901091194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0710 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 9 Jan (MENA)—Dr. Yusuf Wali, deputy prime minister and secretary general of the National Democratic Party [NDP], has announced that the party's bureau staff had met with eight opposition party leaders as part of the exchange of views on the national dialogue called for by President Husni Mubarak in his address to the joint meeting of the People's Assembly and Consultative Council.

In a speech to the NDP's political club last night, Dr. Wali said that the points of agreement with the opposition leaders were far greater than those of disagreement. He said the dialogue is a good initiative because it has enabled the opposition parties to comprehend the NDP's views. It has also enabled the party's bureau staff to understand the concepts of the opposition party leaders concerning the national dialogue issue.

Dr. Wali said that he will meet with the leaders of the Greens Party and the Democratic Unionist Party by the end of this week. Meanwhile, the NDP's bureau staff will meet with the officials in charge of AL-AHRAM's Strategic and Political Studies Center, which is exploring the various opinions about the national dialogue issue.

Muslim Brotherhood Urges Talks With Islamic Groups

NC0801203294 Paris AFP in English 1759 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, Jan 8 (AFP)—Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood on Saturday [8 January] urged the government to start a dialogue with Islamic militant groups in a bid to end a two-year wave of violence.

"Before starting talks, both sides must pledge to aban don violence," according to Brotherhood spokesman Ma mun al-Hudabi, whose group supports creating an Islamic state through peaceful means.

Prime Minister Atif Sidqi said Friday that a dialogue with "terrorists" would be "useless".

President Husni Mubarak, after he won a third term in office in October, called for "a national dialogue" on all the country's problems including religious extremism.

The Muslim Brotherhood, tolerated as a religious group but banned as a political movement, is also asking for "free and honest" elections.

The spokesman said his group should be legalized, although the Egyptian Constitution bans political parties based on religion or regional ideology.

Meanwhile, two men suspected of belonging to militant groups opened fire Friday on two policemen who tried to detain them for questioning in the southern town of Abu Tij, but the officers were unhurt.

This was the first such confrontation in the fundamentalist stronghold of Asyut this year.

The clandestine Al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah and al-Jihad stepped up their violent campaign for an Islamic state in March 1993, targeting government officials, policemen, tourists and Coptic Christians.

So far 272 people have been killed, including 95 policemen and 86 militants.

Al-Kikhya's Wife Departs for Paris

NC0801121794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1047 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 8 jan (MENA)—Mrs. Baha al-'Umari, wife of former Libyan foreign minister Mansur al-Kikhya, left Cairo for Paris this morning. She arrived in Cairo on Wednesday to learn about the circumstances of her husband's disappearance.

Al-Alfi on 'Terrorists,' al-Kikhya Disappearance

NC0901100994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0906 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 9 Jan (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has received a report from Minister of Interior Hasan al-Alfi on the proceedings of the Arab interior ministers' meetings held in Tunis recently.

After a meeting with President Mubarak today, al-Alfi said the main topic of discussion at the conference was security cooperation to prevent crime and combat narcotics, forgery, and incidents of violence and terrorism.

Meetings were also held on the sidelines of the conference with most of the Arab interior ministers to discuss various issues, such as the exchange of visits and training.

Asked if Egypt is holding contacts with friendly countries to arrest fugitive terrorists abroad, he said: God willing, there are measures that will be taken.

On the disappearance of Libyan former Foreign Minister Mansur al-Kikhya and the situation with the multimillionaire of Madinat al-Nasr, Fawzi al-Sayyid, he said that investigations are proceeding to unravel the mystery surrounding the disappearance of the former Libyan foreign minister. The interior minister announced that Fawzi al-Sayyid was arrested in Cairo Governorate at dawn today.

'Abd-al-Rahman's Trial Postponed

NC0801170494 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1515 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Cairo, 8 Jan (MENA)—The Supreme State Security Court-Emergency decided at its session today to postpone the trial of the 48 defendants, led by Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, who are accused of taking part in riots in al-Fayyum in 1989; it is postponed until Monday, 10 January, in order to listen to the defense presentation.

The indictment was read at the beginning of the court session. It accused the defendants of taking part in demonstrations following Friday prayers in al-Shuhada' Mosque in al-Fayyum in 1989, of carrying firearms and ammunition without a license, using them in activities that undermine public law and order, attacking members of the authorities, and attempted murder.

Usamah Qandil, president of the Supreme State Security Prosecution, stated that escaped defendant Muhsin Muhammad Ahmad Kharallah, who is involved in this case, had been arrested on court order. The defendant attended today's session. [passage omitted]

Fugitive 'Terrorist' Arrested in Asyut

NC0901174594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1705 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Cairo, 9 Jan (MENA)—Detectives from Asyut's Security Department have arrested fugitive terrorist Salih Muhammad Mahmud al-Tur, wanted in connection with three assaults on other citizens.

He is wanted in connection with Misdemeanor Case 3493/1993 for assaulting citizen Mursi Muhammad Mursi, Misdemeanor Case 357/1988 for assaulting citizen Jamal Mikha'il, and Asyut Civil Case number 4 of 4 December 1989 for assaulting citizen 'Isam Sabir.

The suspect has been referred to the concerned prosecutor's office so that the proper legal measures can be taken against him.

Sudan

Al-Bashir, Officials on Arab Reconciliation

NC0801114994 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0758 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Khartoum, 8 Jan (MENA)—Sudanese leader Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir has stressed the need to prepare for and remove obstacles to holding an Arab summit.

In a statement to the MENA correspondent in Khartoum, al-Bashir said: Our Arab ties are inclined toward reconciliation with those who are hostile to us because we believe that reconciliation among the Arabs is the peoples' desire. We will continue our efforts to achieve this goal in the near future, if not today.

He added: Everyone in the Arab region now feels that the current discord has weakened the Arab stance on the Arab nation's causes. We have noticed that the Arabs are absent in many international arenas and in the situations that require cooperation and coordination.

For his part, Sudanese Foreign Minister Husayn Abu-Salih has said that his country supports all efforts to achieve Arab reconciliation and all initiatives to restore Arab solidarity.

In a statement to the MENA Khartoum correspondent, he added: We have already declared our support for the initiatives of United Arab Emirates President Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id of Oman, and Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid.

He noted that the current regional and world challenges make Sudan more insistent on collective and bilateral action to achieve Arab reconciliation. This reconciliation, he said, has become a historic responsibility that requires everyone to accomplish it in line with the aspirations of the Arab nations who are fed up with the current divisions.

Abu-Salih says: Arab reconciliation and the restoration of Arab unity are the goals we are trying to accomplish, and this proves our sincere desire to improve the current situation. We are doing all we can to achieve reconciliation, and we will be the first to support an Arab summit to achieve solidarity and rally all efforts to confront the current world and regional dangers that threaten the Arab nations.

He asserted the need for a suitable atmosphere to achieve an inter-Arab political detente and to prepare properly for an Arab summit. He remarked that the bases on which such reconciliation relies are stipulated in the Arab League charter, which we all respect.

Dr. Mustafa 'Uthman Isma'il, Sudanese minister of state and secretary of the popular international friendship council [name and title as received], says achieving Arab reconciliation is one of the fundamental bases of Sudan's foreign policy. This policy's aim, he adds, is to eliminate all causes of division and dispute because Arab solidarity will stop the current disorder.

He believes that the current developments in the Arab world, Israel's attempts at hegemony and expansion, the deadlock in the Palestinian-Israeli peace talks, and pan-Arab security problems such as the water and border problems require an urgent Arab summit. He said that to be successful this summit needs favorable circumstances by removing current tensions and disputes. He expressed his belief that if the current intense reconciliation efforts are boosted, they will pave the way for a summit.

The Sudanese minister of state believes that the Arab League should move in various ways to make the Gulf Cooperation Council issue a resolution calling for such a summit. He notes that the Arab League can also seek other resolutions from the Arab Maghreb Union and from countries outside these two councils. Then the Arab League should meet at the foreign ministers level to discuss proposals and means for the summit.

He says that reconciliations between countries with various disputes could be achieved before the summit, which would consolidate these efforts, and other topics could be discussed.

He affirmed that the summit is necessary and desirable even if it achieves nothing because it will break the psychological barrier caused by the Gulf war and because failing to hold such a summit will encourage others to interfere in Arab affairs and will weaken Arab efforts to restore solidarity.

The Sudanese minister of state pointed out that the general Arab trend is positive and inclined toward reconciliation. He noted that past reconciliation efforts have resulted in easing tension, as was the case in Palestinian-Saudi relations when Faysal al-Husayni in his capacity as head of the Palestinian Steering Committee in the peace talks visited Riyadh; the start of a dialogue between Yemen and Saudi Arabia; and the improvement of Sudan's relations with some of the Gulf states, including Qatar and Oman. He said: I believe that the efforts of the Arab League and its secretary general will help end the current differences, although these efforts might take some time to reach a strategic situation where the Arab countries will form a single economic, military, and social bloc.

He added that Egypt's role is crucial in holding the summit, because as chairman of the Arab League and the OAU and with its influence it can help expedite the efforts to hold an Arab summit.

For his part, Muhammad Shakir al-Siraj, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Sudanese Transitional National Council, the parliament, asserts that restoration of Arab solidarity is a fundamental requirement to ward off the dangers that threaten the Arab world and the suffering of the Iraqi, Libyan, and Sudanese peoples.

Al-Siraj expressed his belief that Arab leaders are able to restore solidarity and that after more than three years since the outbreak of the Gulf war, disputes that resulted from that war should disappear. He hopes the Arab leaders will be able to hold a summit this year.

Government Affirms Willingness To Meet Rebels

EA0701195094 Khartoum SUNA in English 1635 GMT 7 Jan 94

[Text] Nairobi, 7 Jan (SUNA)—The countries of IGADD [Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development] committee for mediation between the Sudanese Government and the rebel movement has held yesterday a meeting with the Sudan delegation headed by the Minister of Peace and Development 'Abdallah Deng Niyal. This meeting took place at Kenyan Foreign Ministry in Nairobi.

The Sudanese minister affirmed during this meeting the government commitment to negotiate on controversial issues with the rebel movement and government engagement to the agreements reached in previous meetings, indicating that the government is ready to negotiate with the rebels as one body or as separate factions.

Heavy Fighting Reported in South of Country

AB0901164594 Paris AFP in English 1622 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Kampala, Jan 9 (AFP)—Heavy fighting has erupted between Sudanese rebels and government troops near the southern town of Kaya, rebel sources said here Sunday [9 January].

An official of the mainstream Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) who asked not to be named said fighting broke out early last week in areas east of Kaya, close to the Ugandan border.

Rebels have since killed 28 goverment soldiers, he claimed, but refused to give rebel casualty figures.

An SPLA spokesman in Nairobi, Justin Arop, confirmed that fighting was raging.

Arop gave other regions where fighting was also going on as Bor, Yei, Morobo, areas between the southern Sudan regional capital of Juba and Kit, and along the railway line in the Bahr al Ghazal Province.

Ugandan officials said the fresh fighting had triggered a new influx of refugees into northern Uganda.

An estimated 3,000 Sudanese were arriving in the region every week, Ugandan deputy minister for local government Steven Chebrot said.

Uganda has a Sudanese refugee population of 200,000. Some 70,000 of them have arrived in the past five months.

The SPLA has waged a decade-long war against the Khartoum government to free the mainly animist and Christian southern Sudan from domination by the Moslem, Arabised north.

Rebel Leaders Reportedly To Surrender Arms

EA0901174794 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1315 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Excerpt] During his visit to Malakal, Muhammad al-Amin Khalifah, the speaker of the Transitional National Assembly [TNA], met with a group of leaders from the united faction of the rebel movement, from the area of Fanjak. They came there to hold negotiations with state authorities, with the objective of taking part in development and construction. Mr. Khalifah commended the decision of the group to join the national march and take part in reconstruction in the Upper Nile State.

He said that their return had come at the same time as the country's celebrations marking its independence.

Colonel Thomas Dod, the leader of the group, which also included 11 other officers, said that his forces had decided to return and surrender their weapons, as they wanted to take part in reconstruction. He said that his group was in need of essential services such as education, health, and agricultural inputs for the people of the area. [passage omitted]

Tunisia

Al-Qadhdhafi Envoy Holds Talks With Ben Ali

LD0701180094 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 7 Jan 94

[Text] This afternoon in Carthage Palace, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali received Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi, Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's personal envoy to his excellency the president. Maj. al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi said after the audience that he was very pleased to meet his excellency the president and convey to him the respectful greetings and appreciation of his brother, Col. Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the September revolution. He pointed out that he also conveyed to President Zine El Abdine Ben Ali a verbal message from the leader of the Libyan revolution concerning bilateral relations and ways of developing them, as well as with the march of the Arab Maghreb Union and scopes of its development for the good of the peoples of the region.

Maj. al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi added that the meeting was an occasion for more dialogue over several international and Arab issues of common concern. He said: On this occasion, I have stressed the eagerness of the Arab Libyan leadership and people to promote relations and cooperation between the two peoples because we are convinced that this is a fateful and strategic option confirmed by events and time.

After mentioning the common objectives, hopes, and destiny of the Tunisian and Libyan peoples, which call for more cohesiveness between them, Maj. al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi concluded his statement saying: I have found with President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali the same interest, feelings, and satisfaction regarding the situation of relations between the September revolution and that of 7 November [overthrow of Tunisian President Habib Bourgiba].

Meets Other Ministers

LD0901234194 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Major al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi yesterday morning met brother Hamed Karoui, the prime minister of brotherly Tunisia. The meeting dealt with the bilateral relations and ways of developing them to the benefit of the one Arab people in the two brotherly countries in a way that would strengthen the march and the structure of the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] in confronting the challenges of the era and overcoming backwardness.

The meeting also dealt with international and Arab issues of common interest. The meeting was attended by the general delegate of the Great Jamahiriya to Tunisia.

Maj. al-Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi yesterday morning also met brother Habib Ben Yahya, the minister of foreign affairs of brotherly Tunisia. The meeting looked into the bilateral relations and ways of promoting them as well as the march of the AMU and the prospects of its development to the benefit of the sons of this part of the great Arab homeland.

The meeting was attended by brother Said Ben Mustapha, secretary of state at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for AMU affairs, and the director general of the Arab Affairs Section at the Tunisian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The meeting was also attended by the brother general delegate of the Great Jamahiriyah to Tunisia.

On the periphery of the visit, Maj. Khuwaylidi al-Humaydi yesterday evening at his residence in Tunis received brother Abdallah Kallel, minister of state and minister of interior in brotherly Tunisia. The meeting looked into the bilateral relations and ways of bolstering them in a way that would consolidate the cohesion between the sons of the one Arab people in the two brotherly countries as well as the march of the AMU and the prospects of strengthening it.

Western Sahara

Polisario Protests French Minister's Visit

LD0901144794 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] So far nothing has permitted the holding of a referendum on self-determination in Western Sahara in accordance with the UN peace plan. If efforts have failed or have not been made in this connection, the town of Layoune in Western Sahara has been a focus of attention in recent days. The Saudi interior minister is currently in Layoune, which was visited recently by his French counterpart. This has aroused the anger of the Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro]. Our correspondent Mourad has the details:

[Mourad] Polisario yesterday expressed its surprise and displeasure at the visit of Charles Pasqua to Layoune two days ago. In a communique the Front describes the French interior minister's visit to be blatantly at variance with the responsibility of France as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Nothing has filtered out about the Pasqua visit, which coincided with the presence of Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayif Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz in Layoune. The senior Saudi official has been in Layoune on a private visit since last Thursday, according to MAP.

The situation in Western Sahara remains generally tense, as admitted by special UN representative Yaqub Khan, who has further said that he is making efforts to resolve the

Saharan problem. The special UN representative made this statement after meeting President Maaouya Ould Sid Ahmed Taya of Mauritania in Nouakchott yesterday.

It should be mentioned that the UN peace plan for a referendum in Western Sahara is obstructed by a disagreement between Morocco and Polisario, the conflicting parties, over the number of voters.

Leadership on Minister's Visit

LD0901152994 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] The Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro [Polisario] obviously did not expect the visit of French Interior Minister Charles Pasqua to Layoune, capital of Western Sahara, on Friday. In a communique released last night, Saharawi leaders made no secret of the fact that they were surprised. Jerome Bastion reports:

[Bastion] Twenty-four hours after Charles Pasqua's brief visit to Layoune, the Polisario Front in Algiers expressed the surprise and the total dismay of the Saharawi people regarding this most serious gesture. According to the communique, this first visit by a leading foreign official to Western Sahara is in blatant contradiction with the responsibility of France, a member of the UN Security Council.

France recently offered its good offices to set up a direct meeting in Paris between Moroccans and Saharawis, after Polisario leaders had criticized France's wait-and-see policy in connection with the settlement of the conflict in Western Sahara. The visit by the French interior minister, although unofficial, has thus caused frustration and disappointment, I quote, among the Saharawis, all the more so because it was to be followed by that of his Saudi counterpart.

At the same time, the UN representative for Western Sahara, Yaqub Ali Kahn, is touring the region. He is visiting the refugee camps of Tindouf today. He said yesterday in Nouakchott, in Mauritania: The issue of the Sahara is in a critical state.

The referendum on self-determination was to take place at the end of 1993 under the aegis of the UN. The UN secretary general has just announced that it could be organized next June. The issue is still in deadlock. It was to be at the core of the talks which took place yesterday between the Algerian foreign minister and Saharawi President Mohamed Abdelaziz together with his minister of defense and of foreign affairs.

Bahrain

UK Secretary of State for Defense Arrives

JN0801095294 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0740 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Manama, 8 Jan (WAKH)—Malcolm Rifkind, British secretary of state for defense, and the accompanying delegation arrived in Manama today on a visit to Bahrain. During the visit, he will hold talks on bolstering relations between the two friendly countries.

Rifkind was welcomed on arrival by Staff Lieutenant General Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Ahmad Al Khalifah, Bahraini defense minister and deputy commander in chief of the Bahrain Defense Force; Hugh James Junnec, UK ambassador to Bahrain; and a number of senior Bahraini officers.

Amir Receives UK Secretary

JN0801113594 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0955 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Manama, 8 Jan (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, the amir of Bahrain; His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah, prime minister; and His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Isa Al Khalifah, heir apparent and commander in chief of the Bahrain Defense Force, received Malcolm Rifkind, British secretary of state for defense, and the delegation accompanying him, in Manama today.

During the meeting, the amir of the State of Bahrain welcomed the British guest and his delegation, noting the close relations of friendship and cooperation between the two friendly countries and people. His highness voiced the State of Bahrain's eagerness to consolidate the cooperation existing between the two countries in all fields of service of the two people's interests. [passage omitted]

Heir Apparent Receives UK Secretary

JN0801133994 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1150 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Manama, 8 Jan (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Isa Al Khalifah, heir apparent and commander in chief of the Bahrain Defense Force, received here today Malcolm Rifkind, British secretary of state for defense.

The Bahraini heir apparent lauded bilateral relations in various fields, and expressed pride in the level of development which these relations have attained. His highness and the British secretary of state reviewed a number of issues and the current regional and international developments.

The meeting was attended by Staff Lieutenant General Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Ahmad Al khalifah, defense minister and deputy commander in chief, and Hugh James Junnec, UK ambassador to Bahrain.

UK Secretary Departs After Visit

JN0901142094 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1230 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Manama, 9 Jan (WAKH)—Malcolm Rifkind, British secretary of state for defense, left Manama today after a two-day visit to Bahrain. During the visit, he held talks on enhancing bilateral relations.

Rifkind was seen off by Staff Lieutenant General Khalifah Bin-Ahmad Al Khalifah, deputy commander in chief of the Bahrain Defense Force, and Hugh James Junnec, the British ambassador to Bahrain.

Kuwait

British Defense Secretary Arrives, Comments

LD0901185694 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1726 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Kuwait, 9 Jan—British Secretary of Defense Malcolm Rifkind arrived here this afternoon on a visit to Kuwait. He was met by the defense minister, Shaykh 'Ali al-Sabah al-Salim.

In a statement to the Kuwait News Agency after his arrival, Rifkind said that this was his second visit to the Kuwait as defense secretary and that he had previously met Shaykh 'Ali al-Sabah al-Salim in Britain.

Rifkind added that the United Kingdom assessed its relations with the State of Kuwait highly and that it appreciated the way it had been able to reconstruct the country since its liberation from the Iraqi aggression by the international coalition forces.

Rifkind added: In a region which is still very volatile, and where there is a lot of uncertainty and a great possibility for aggression by the Iraqi regime, it is important that the countries of the region and the United Kingdom should stand firmly together. He said: We have some good arrangements with Kuwait, which announced some time ago that it was interested in buying Warrior armored troop carriers from the United Kingdom, and we have welcomed that.

He added: There is a lot of interest by the Sultanate of Oman and Bahrain to establish close cooperation with us. We are also cooperating with Kuwait in the military field. This includes joint exercises, and a large number of Kuwaiti military personnel are receiving training in the United Kingdom.

The British minister went on to say: We believe that it is imperative that Iraq should release all the prisoners. We know that Kuwait is concerned about their fate and we share that concern.

He said: It is important to inform the Iraqi regime of the need to comply with all UN demands if it wishes to join the world community on an equal basis again.

Rifkind concluded that the issue of prisoners was of paramount importance not only to Kuwait but to all those

concerned on humanitarian grounds, and to those who were interested in the fate of any citizen held in Iraq.

It is to be noted that the British defense secretary is on a tour in the Gulf region that has included Oman and Bahrain in addition to Kuwait. He will leave tomorrow for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia at the end of his current tour.

Received by Amir, Heir Apparent

LD1001113994 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 10 Jan 93

[Text] At 1015 today, his highness the amir of the country received British Secretary of Defense Malcolm Rifkind on the occasion of the latter's visit to the country. The meeting was attended by Defense Minister Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah and British Ambassador to Kuwait W. Fullerton.

At 1045 today at the cabinet Headquarters, His Highness Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, the heir apparent and prime minister, received the British defense secretary and the accompanying delegation who are visiting the country. The meeting was attended by Defense Minister Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah and British Ambassador to Kuwait W. Fullerton.

At 1130 today Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah received Commander in Chief of the U.S. Central Command General Joseph Hoare, who is visiting the country at present. The meeting was attended by Defense Minister Shaykh 'Ali Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah, Chief of the Army General Staff Major General 'Ali al-Mu'min, and U.S. Ambassador to the State of Kuwait Edward Gnehm.

UK's Rifkind Departs

LD1001144394 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1307 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] Kuwait, 10 Jan—British Defense Secretary Malcolm Rifkind left the state of Kuwait at noon today for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia within the framework of his Gulf tour. During his one-day visit to Kuwait, the British minister had a meeting with Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad, with Heir Apparent and Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, and with senior officials in the Defense Ministry.

John Davis, the information bureau official at the British Embassy in Kuwait, told the Kuwaiti News Agency "KUNA" that Rifkind discussed bilateral issues with Kuwait officials. He said that regional security was the most important subject during the talks which also included the reaction of the Gulf Cooperation Council and friendly states to threats from Iraq.

He added that a number of memoranda of understanding between Kuwait and the United Kingdom and ways of implementing them were discussed. Minister Rifkind was quoted as saying that his visit was "very successful."

Oman

UK Secretary of State for Defense Views Talks

JN0801080094 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0520 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Muscat, 7 Jan (WAKH)—Malcolm Rifkind, British secretary of state for defense, has asserted that his country attaches great importance to its relations with the Gulf states.

The British secretary of state, currently on a visit to Muscat, added that his visit to Oman aims to bolster Britain's relations with Oman and other regional states. In a statement to the Omani News Agency, he said his talks with the Omani officials focused on security in the Gulf region and issues of common interest.

Minister Departs for Saudi Arabia

JN0801150094 Muscat Radio Oman Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, minister of state for foreign affairs, left the country today for Riyadh on a short visit to fraternal Saudi Arabia. This visit will be followed by a visit to the fraternal Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. His excellency will also go to Damascus tomorrow to take part in the meetings of the foreign ministers of the Damascus Declaration, which is comprised of the Gulf Cooperation Council member states, Egypt, and Syria. On Tuesday, his excellency will go to Cairo to hold talks with a number of Egyptian officials. On Wednesday, he will visit fraternal Yemen and hold talks with the Yemeni officials. [passage omitted]

Qatar

Amir Receives Kuwaiti Foreign Minister, Letter

JN0801114094 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1025 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Doha, 8 Jan (WAKH)—His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani, amir of Qatar, has received a letter from His Highness Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, amir of Kuwait, dealing with developments in the region, the march of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC], and bilateral relations. The letter also thanks Qatar for its position in support of Kuwait.

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, Kuwaiti first deputy prime minister and foreign minister, delivered the letter when his highness the amir of Qatar received him here today. During the meeting, they discussed regional, Arab, and international developments and ways to enhance bilateral relations in various fields.

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad's visit to Qatar is part of a tour of the GCC states during which he will deliver similar letters to their leaders.

Saudi Arabia

France's Balladur, Delegation Pay Official Visit

King Meets Balladur

LD0801222894 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2108 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 8 Jan—King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, held a meeting this evening at the Yamamah palace with the prime minister of the French Republic, Edouard Balladur.

Balladur News Conference

LD0901205494 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Excerpts] French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur has stressed that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia constitutes an element of stability, equilibrium, and security, and it is regarded as a key factor for strengthening stability in the region. He said this in a statement opening the news conference he held in Riyadh today at the conclusion of his visit to the Kingdom. [passage omitted]. The prime minister further said: We have agreed on coordination, consultation, and dialogue at all levels between state bodies as well as between companies, with a periodic exchange of views in order to assess bilateral relations and bolster the ties of cooperation in all fields, and to give fresh momentum to economic and trade cooperation.

The French prime minister mentioned the domains of cooperation that had been discussed, such as energy and defense, and he said: We have decided to set up a team of experts to complete the projects for cooperation which have already been discussed, examined, and prepared in detail, and which we want to start carrying out. [passage omitted]

Naturally, the French prime minister said, we discussed the situation in the region and recent events there, and we reaffirmed the need for the full implementation of the UN resolutions. Concerning the problems of the region at large, he said, we both stressed our full support for a just and comprehensive solution to the Middle East problem on the basis of the Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425. [passage omitted].

The prime minister affirmed that his visit was aimed at giving a fresh impetus to relations between the two countries, and at laying down the principles that will clearly govern these relations. He denied that his visit was to conclude precise and defined contracts. He told journalists that France and the Kingdom had decided to set up a working team to discuss a number of projects of cooperation in the two friendly countries, complete what has been achieved, and secure progress in these matters. [passage omitted].

For his part, and to a question on the problem of Bosnia-Herzegovina, the French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, who took part in the news conference, pointed out that he had discussed this matter with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, and he had the chance to explain the French and European diplomacy on this matter. He said: I believe that I have given a useful and detailed explanation to Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal that permits the strengthening of common understanding aimed at a peaceful settlement of this issue. He expressed his regret at the appalling deterioration of the situation, and he blamed all the parties to the conflict for rejecting the peace plans. [passage omitted]

On the other hand, with regard to the problem of Bosnia-Herzegovina and what he learned in the Kingdom concerning the Saudi position in this respect, the French prime minister expressed understanding for the concern of Saudi Arabia toward this part of the world. He said that at the talks, he had tried to explain the French position and that of the European Union with a view to breaking the vicious circle surrounding the problem. [passage omitted]

Juppe Meets Foreign Minister

LD0801203394 Riyadh SPA in English 1947 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Riyadh, Jan 8, SPA—Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, the foreign minister held a meeting here tonight with his French counterpart, Alain Juppe who is accompanying Prime Minister Edouard Balladur in his current visit to the Kingdom.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest including situation of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the peace process in the Middle East were discussed.

The meeting was attended by 'Abd-al-Rahman Mansuri, undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry for political affairs, Jamil al-Hujaylan, the Saudi ambassador to France and a number of senior officials of the Foreign Ministry.

From the French side, the meeting was attended by Dennis Bochard director of the Middle East Department at the French Foreign Ministry Emi Bertard, advisor at the Office of the Foreign Minister and John Pierre deputy head of the Middle East Department.

Defense Minister Meets French Official

LD0801225194 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2108 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Riyadh, 8 Jan—His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the second deputy prime minister, minister of defense and aviation, and inspector general, received in his palace in Riyadh this evening French Defense Minister Francois Leotard and the delegation accompanying him.

His Royal Highness Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz held a meeting with Mr. Francois Leotard, which was attended on the Saudi side by His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal Al Sa'ud, the minister of foreign affairs; Mr. Ibrahim al-Anqari, special adviser to his majesty, the custodian of the two holy mosques; Muhammad Aba-al-Khayl, the finance and national economy minister; and Health Minister Faysal al-Hujaylan.

The meeting was attended on the French side by Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, the French ambassador to the Kingdom, Mr. Jean Bressot [name and title as received], and the delegation accompanying the French defense minister.

Information Minister Meets French Official

LD0801205094 Riyadh SPA in English 1949 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Riyadh, Jan 8, SPA—Information Minister 'Ali al-Sha'ir met here tonight with the French Minister of Industry, Posts, Telephone and Foreign Trade Gerard Longuet and talks dealt with ways of cooperation between the two countries in information sectors. The two ministers also reviewed ways to benefit from the media satellites and coordination between technicians of the two countries in this field.

The meeting was attended by Ibrahim al-Qadhi, undersecretary of the Ministry of Information for administrative affairs, Dr Fu'ad al-Farsi, undersecretary of the Ministry for Information Affairs, Prince Turki Bin Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, assistant undersecretary for planning and studies and many senior officials.

Balladur, Delegation End Visit

LD0901120494 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1135 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 9 Jan—French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur and his accompanying delegation left Riyadh this morning after an official two-day [as received] visit to the Kingdom, during which he was received by King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al-Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy places. [passage omitted]

United Arab Emirates

Shaykh Zayid Receives Message From Yeltsin

JN1001144794 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0930 GMT 10 jan 94

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 10 Jan (WAKH)—United Arab Emirates President His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan has received a message from Russian President Boris Yeltsin, dealing with relations of friendship between the two countries and means of promoting them in all fields.

Shaykh Hamdan Bin-Zayid Al Nuhayyan, minister of state for foreign affairs, received the message when he met today with Oleg Derkovskiy, the Russian ambassador to the United Arab Emirates.

Yemen

Tribal Leaders' Help Sought To Free Oil Workers

NC0701185894 Paris AFP in English 1643 GMT 7 Jan 94

[Text] Sanaa, Jan 7 (AFP)—The Yemeni authorities on Friday asked tribal leaders to use their influence to win the release of four Yemenis, a Canadian and a Briton working for the US Hunt Oil firm, political sources here said.

A group from the Khawlan tribe kidnapped the six on Tuesday in the Ma'rib region 100 kilometers (60 miles) east of here and are demanding the release of one of their own men in exchange, Hunt engineers said.

Earlier reports said the kidnappers were from the Daham tribe.

Political sources here said the government was in contact with several tribal leaders in a bid to persuade the kidnappers to free the six, a helicopter pilot and five engineers.

They were kidnapped after flying to the Ma'rib area to inspect a leak at a pumping station, Hunt engineers said, adding that the helicopter was also seized.

The Yemeni Socialist Party's AL-THAWRI newspaper reported that the oil workers were trying to defuse a bomb planted by the Khawlan on one of the company's pipelines. Hunt Oil did not confirm that report.

Company engineers told AFP that the kidnappers wanted the authorities to free a tribesman who has been held for several weeks by Yemeni authorities in exchange for the six.

Daham tribesmen kidnapped an American diplomat, Haynes Mahoney, in November and held him for a week. It also held two American engineers from Hunt Oil for five days last May.

The Daham and Khawlan are part of the Bakil tribal group, which is generally loyal to Yemeni President 'Ali Abdallah Salih. But the Khawlan are known to support Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid's Socialist party.

The two leaders, the first from the north and the second from the south, have been split since August over how to run the affairs of Yemen, united in May 1990 after three hundred years of separation.

Several other foreigners have been abducted in recent months by tribes trying to exert pressure on the government, which is struggling to cope with serious economic and political problems.

Ma'rib, where the six men are believed to be held, is a mountainous region with some peaks as high as 2,000 meters. It is controlled by the heavily armed Bakil, who have for long encroached on the central government's authority.

President Arrives for Meeting With al-Bid

JN0901064894 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, arrived in Ta'izz last night in response to the call and initiative of their eminences the ulema to meet with his brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council, at the

al-Janad Mosque today, Sunday, 27 Rajab 1414 Hegira, the anniversary of Prophet Muhammad's ascension to heaven.

In a statement to the Yemeni news agency, SABA', the brother chairman said that he hopes his meeting with his brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, which coincides with a religious occasion honored by the masses of our people and Islamic nation, namely, the anniversary of the Prophet Muhammad's ascension to heaven, will be an opportunity to find effective solutions to the current political crisis. He noted that our people have suffered, and continue to suffer, greatly as a result of this crisis which has had negative repercussions on the overall situation in the country and on citizens' living conditions in particular. He expressed the wish that this will be the last crisis in the history of the homeland.

He expressed great appreciation for the nationalist initiative of their eminences the ulema, an initiative that reflects their eagerness to perform their religious and national duty and to exert good offices to enable our homeland to overcome the difficult situation caused by the political crisis and the challenges that it has posed to the march of unity and democracy.

The brother chairman also praised the results of the meetings of the committee for dialogue among political forces as part of the efforts to overcome the crisis and firmly establish the pillars of the modern Yemeni state, the state of order, law, and constitutional institutions.

The brother chairman is accompanied by a number of officials.

Meanwhile, senior Yemeni ulema from various Yemeni governorates began to arrive at the Ma'adh Bin-Jabal Mosque in the al-Janad area in the Ta'izz Governorate to attend the grand gathering of the Yemeni ulema scheduled to begin today, Sunday, as part of the ulema's continued efforts to tackle the current political crisis. At the end of their meeting in Sanaa late last month, the ulema called for a meeting between brothers Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Presidential Council chairman, and 'Ali Salim al- Bid, Presidential Council vice chairman, as a beginning to resolve the crisis and strengthen Yemen's unity.

Gunman Fires at al-Bid's House

NC0901081894 Paris AFP in English 0734 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Aden, Yemen, Jan 9 (AFP)—A gunman sprayed the Yemeni vice-president's house here with automatic fire but there were no casualties, informed sources said Sunday.

The gunman was arrested after the dawn attack on Saturday, and it was not known if Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid was home at the time.

Al-Bid has been at loggerheads with President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih for months, demanding the introduction of economic and political reforms before he will return to the capital Sanaa.

Al-Bid Boycotts Ta'izz Meeting

JN0901131394 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Sources from the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] say that the party's secretary general and Yemeni Vice President, 'Ali Salim al-Bid, has refused to leave for Ta'izz to meet with President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih. Salih arrived in Ta'izz last night for a meeting with al-Bid which he described as a meeting of reconciliation.

The sources, who preferred anonymity, said that al-Bid's attendance will depend on the implementation of the 18 points that the YSP presented as solutions and practical ways out of the current crisis and which the Salih-led General People's Congress party accepted unreservedly.

The Ta'izz meeting between the two men had been prepared by the Yemeni Ulema Association. Several hours before it was scheduled to begin today a machine-gun attack was mounted on al-Bid's house in Aden.

The Yemeni police who caught the assailant are interrogating him to reveal the motives for his attack. It is not known if al-Bid was at home when the attack occurred.

It is worth mentioning that al-Bids has refused to leave Aden for the past five months and is demanding deep-rooted reforms in Yemen as a condition for traveling to Sanaa.

Salih Regrets al-Bid Failure To Attend

JN0901143794 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Presidential Council chairman, today performed the noon prayers with their eminences the 'ulema in the historic al-Janad Mosque in Ta'izz.

The brother Presidential Council chairman attended part of their eminences the 'ulema's meeting in al-Janad. He delivered a speech in which he said he was pleased to attend this meeting, which encompasses a group of their eminences the 'ulema, in response to the invitation they extended to him and to brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid to meet on this great day in which the Muslim world celebrates a glorious Muslim occasion [Prophet Muhammad's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem].

He said: How I wished that brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid was here in order to work together to preserve the great achievement of unity that reunited the Yemeni family after its estrangement and ended our people's nightmare of division.

The brother Presidential Council chairman said: We have come here to protect our homeland and spare our people the sedition hatched by those who do not wish to see them

enjoy [word indistinct], security, and stability. Our responsibility toward God and our people dictates that we should rise above trivial things and give priority to the supreme national interest.

The Presidential Council chairman urged the brother 'ulema to say what is right and to stand against evil and (?those who fabricate seditions), intensify them, and benefit from their continuation.

Further on Salih Speech to 'Ulema

JN0901210494 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, Presidential Council chairman, today performed the noon prayer with their eminence the 'ulema in the historic al-Janad Mosque in Ta'izz.

The brother Presidential Council chairman attended part of their eminence the 'ulema's meeting in al-Janad. He delivered a speech in which he said: I am pleased to attend this meeting, which encompasses a group of their eminence the 'ulema, in response to the invitation you extended to me and to brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid to meet on this great day, which is dear to our hearts and in which the Muslim world celebrates a glorious Muslim occasion [Prophet Muhammad's night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem], in this historic mosque that was built by a virtuous follower of the prophet, Mu'adh Bin-Jabal. This was the first mosque to be built in Yemen and on this pure soil.

He added: How I wished that brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid was here in order to work together to preserve the great achievement of unity that reunited the Yemeni family after its estrangement and ended from our people's nightmare of division. We come here to protect our homeland against threats and challenges, and spare our people from the seditions hatched by those who do not wish them good, security, and stability. Our responsibility toward God and our people dictates that we should rise above trivial matters, selfish interests, and give priority to the supreme national interest.

The Presidential Council chairman added: Because of the crisis, our people have for several months now been putting up with many problems and difficulties, which inflicted serious harm on them and caused major cracks in the ranks of the Yemeni family. They also had an impact on the national economy and spread fears and concern among all of our people—the old, women, men, and children.

He added: Unity was achieved on 22 May 1990 through peaceful, democratic dialogue and respect for opinions and opposing opinions. We must abide by this principle, and not any other alternative, in order to spare our country any dangerous slips. You, the Yemeni 'ulema are meeting here after you have come from various parts of Yemen in order to fulfill a national and religious duty to unify ranks and stands, champion national unity, protect Yemeni unity, and spare our country all risks.

The Presidential Council chairman added: You have a responsibility to say what is right and to stand against evil and those who fabricate seditions, ignite them, and benefit from their continuation; and against those who advocate division, secession, and breaking the national ranks. This is your national and religious duty, which you have to fulfill to please God and your conscience and people.

The brother president said: Unity is a great action and a religious duty. It deserves that we sacrifice all that is dear and beloved to us to protect and nurture it. Unity was achieved to stay and to become further entrenched in the heart and conscience of every Yemeni. It will not be relinquished no matter the cost.

The president said that he has agreed to all the points and demands that the brothers in the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] put forth, as well as to the initiatives submitted during the various gatherings to safeguard unity and to spare the homeland any perils or challenges that endanger the march of its unity and its democratic course.

The brother president said: We made concessions for the sake of Yemen and for the sake of the present and future of Yemeni generations, which depends on the entrenchment of unity that is protected by democracy. This is why we came here to unite our stands and resort to dialogue, reason, and logic and to search for effective means that will safeguard our national unity. National duty dictates that all of us must safeguard the great achievement, not to fall prey to our whims and private interests, and to reach understanding and not fight one another. We should also deprive those who sow sedition in our society of any opportunity for the shedding of Yemeni blood. We seek peace and stability for our homeland and tranquility for our society.

The president referred to the practices that harm the homeland's unity and its democratic course, which certain irresponsible writers and newspapers carry out.

The president said: On the personal level, we suffered greatly from these misdeeds, which violate all laws, norms, and ethics. We put up with them for the sake of unity and to entrench the democratic march in our country. However, some regrettably understand democracy to be slander and harm against others. They practice democracy in a flawed manner.

The brother president emphasized that democracy represents responsible behavior and constructive criticism to carry out reforms and reach better things. The brother president pointed out the impact the crisis has had on the daily life of our people and the difficulties and great tribulation it had brought about. He reaffirmed the need to expeditiously emerge from this difficult situation in a responsible manner so that all will devote their efforts to constructive and useful work. He appealed to their eminence, the 'ulema to guide the sons of the people to the path of right and good and to what will enhance national unity and safeguard the homeland's unity, and to always be advocates of right and soldiers of justice and right, fearing no one but God.

The meeting was attended by brother Shaykh 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zindani, member of the Presidential council; Field Marshal 'Abdallah al-Sallal; Qadi Muhammad

Isma'il' al-Hajji, chief of the Higher Court and head of the Yemeni 'Ulema Society; and other officials.

Clerics Discuss Political Crisis 9 Jan

JN0901130494 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Yemen's ulema held a closed meeting at the Mu'adh Bin-Jabal Mosque in al-Janad today to discuss the political crisis in the country and what the ulema can do as part of their duty and responsibilities to tackle the crisis.

Earlier, a speech rally was held at the Mu'adh Bin-Jabal Mosque. It was attended by brothers Field Marshal 'Abdallah al-Sallal; Shaykh 'Abd-al-Wahib al-Zandani, member of the Presidential Council and member of the Yemeni Ulema Society; Judge Muhammad Isma'il al-Hajji, head of the Yemeni Ulema Society; and a large number of senior ulema.

Dialogue Committee Decisions on Security

JN0701214494 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 7 Jan 94

[Text] In its meeting this evening in the economic and commercial capital, Aden, the Political Forces Dialogue Committee [PFDC] began discussing the second topic on its agenda, the structure of the state, after the committee ended discussion on the first topic and agreed on ways of tackling media problems, and the subject of those accused of security violations, and other security and military issues.

At the meeting, several views and remarks were presented with the aim of enriching the subject to find a sound treatment that stands as the basic pillars for building the modern Yemeni state, the state of law and order, and in a manner that assists the judiciary in eliminating all adverse phenomena.

The meeting approved the formation of a committee to study the paper presented by various parties on the principles for building the state in order to work out a paper on the subject and to present it to the PFDC at its forthcoming meeting.

The PFDC continued discussing the ideas presented by the dialogue's parties, and through serious and responsible dialogue and through sincere interaction the committee made decisive decisions on the first point on its agenda, and approved a number of procedures.

Concerning the media; television, radio, and newspapers; the committee decided that no statements relating to officials which speak about any political party or hint about a charge against a party, parties, or individuals should be broadcast or published. The media should refrain from becoming involved in issues that fuel the crisis.

The committee called for expanding interviews and programs on the decisions on which the dialogue parties agree, and emphasizing the programs, interviews, and seminars that call for unity and integration of the national front, and which call for rapprochement between political groups in the country. It called for rejecting the statements, interviews, and speeches from any party that condemn any party or individual in the government with the aim of escalating the crisis and obstructing the dialogue. It calls for refraining from leaking news to foreign media on the crisis and for refraining from leaking anything that fuels the crisis, escalates differences, harms the national unity and thy unity of the internal front.

The committee decided that the officials should not make any statements on the crisis in the country, and warned any Yemeni correspondent or reporter for foreign media against publishing false and fabricated news on the crisis and the dialogue.

As for those accused of security violations, the PFDC emphasized that decisive measures should be taken to arrest fleeing suspects involved in assassinations, assassination attempts, highway robberies, and other cases of security violations, and to immediately begin trying those arrested in sabotage actions in legal and open trials.

The committee says anyone who provides shelter to a suspect wanted by security organs, or anyone who hides a jail breaker will be considered a violator of the law, and legal actions will be taken against him.

The PFDC stressed the need to expeditiously issue a law on bearing arms, implement it, and review the current law to make it more strict to limit bearing arms and to curb their use and trading in them. Investigations should continue to locate camps or areas used to train people to commit violent acts and to take the appropriate measures in this regard.

Regarding the security and military aspect, the PFDC decided to remove all checkpoints inside and outside the cities regardless of whether they are affiliated with the Defense Ministry, the Interior Ministry, or both ministries.

The PFDC called for holding general reconciliation to stop the bloodshed of the Yemenis. In accordance with this reconciliation, no revenge will be taken, and anyone who takes revenge will be considered an outlaw. The competent state organs will be responsible for taking tough legal measures against those outlaws. The PFDC decided to move the units from the outskirts of some areas in the governorates of Ta'izz, Lahj, Ibb, Abyan, Shabwah, al-Bayda', and Ma'rib and to redeploy them in areas agreed upon by an Armed Forces technical committee. The Defense Ministry will take measures to implement this and a decree to this effect will be issued within one week with implementation to begin immediately afterward.

The PFDC decided that no military patrols should move in cities or on roads. Police will be responsible for patrols in accordance with security requirements.

The PFDC decided to withdraw the Armed Forces from the cities and to redeploy them within a period that does not exceed two months in accordance with a central, scientific, and united plan that prepares for their merger, organization, and straightening out their affairs provided that their

merger will not take more than four months following the withdrawal from cities. The military police's role will be confined to the security and discipline of the military units. The military police are not allowed to carry out activities or patrolling that conflict with the authority of the public security. The Armed Forces commanders and soldiers are also prevented from intervening in the affairs of the government authorities, the local issues of citizens, or the governorates affairs. They are also prevented from carrying out any activity in their working areas that conflict with the duties of the judicial, executive, or political authorities. There will be no recruitment, arming, or mobilization of any units, militias, border guards, popular guards, or any similar groups and the formation of any new groups shall be canceled. The PFDC decided to void all illegal promotions that have been awarded since the beginning of 1993.

Committee Continues Meetings

JN0901213294 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] During this evening's meeting in Aden, the economic and commercial capital, the political forces' dialogue committee examined a draft document on the bases of building the modern Yemeni state as presented by the subcommittee stemming from the dialogue committee. The conferees discussed the document and enriched it with their opinions and observations. They stressed the importance of drawing up the basic principles for the attainment of a modern Yemeni state and specifying its central and local bodies, considering these principles a strong basis for the reformation of the political, economic, and social situation in a manner that will safeguard the state of unity and reinforce the democratic process. They stressed that building the state on strong foundations will allow for movement toward the national objectives in the fields of social and economic construction, development, and growth.

The dialogue committee is still discussing the bases plan as a prelude to endorsing it after introducing some amendments. The political forces' dialogue committee began its meeting this morning at the Executive Bureau hall in Aden by discussing a plan on the bases of building the state. It also reviewed the efforts being exerted to follow up the implementation of the dialogue committee decisions on ending the deterioration and the extent to which the decisions are being abided by by the concerned parties. It regretted that some parties have failed to abide by what was decided on in order to stop the deterioration. The importance of expediting the tasks assigned to the committee and overcoming all obstacles has been emphasized in order to reach suitable solutions to the crisis. The bases of building the state are some of the most important issues of discussion as they define the future picture in a manner that fulfills our Yemeni people's aspiration for security, stability, development, and prosperity.

Al-Bid Criticizes Presidential Council Message

JN0701220794 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in English 2100 GMT 7 Jan 94

[Text] Mr. 'Ali Salim al-Bid, the vice chairman of the Presidential Council and secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party, and Mr. Salim Salih Muhammad, the member of the Presidential Council and assistant secretary of the Yemeni Socialist Party, published a statement about the message of the Presidential Council to Mr. Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, the prime minister, and the ministers.

The statement said that the message which was sent in the name of the Presidential Council is an open and desperate attempt to distort the nature of the political and economic crisis in the country, and an attempt to look for a scapegoat with the purpose of canceling the real causes of the deterioration of the political, economic, and security situation. Its purpose is also to divert attention from those who are behind the misuse the [word indistinct] of the state funds, the devaluation of the local currency, and the wave of terrorism.

The statement said that the message which was issued by some members of the Presidential Council took place at the time when the national dialogue commission is holding its meetings, and is about to complete its work and come out with a general agreement to find a solution to the political crisis.

Mr. 'Ali Salim al-Bid and Mr. Salim Salih Muhammad affirmed that they are not responsible for the practices, and are putting responsibility on those who seek to escalate the situation.

Socialist Party Official Slain in Sanaa Attack

NC0901081394 Paris AFP in English 2157 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Sanaa, Jan 8 (AFP)—Unidentified gunmen shot and killed an official of the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) here, party officials announced Saturday.

'Abd-al-Karim Salih al-Jihmi was the second YSP official to be killed in 10 days and the 152nd party member to fall victim to gunmen since North and South Yemen merged in May 1990.

Party officials said three gunmen fired several shots at al-Jihmi late Friday when he drew up in his car before his home in the Bi'r 'Ubayd district in east Sanaa.

The killing comes as a committee seeking to reconcile Yemen's divided government called for the dismantling of illegal military groups in urban areas and proposed a national reconciliation conference.

The committee, grouping representatives from President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's General Popular Congress (GPC), Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid's YSP and opposition movements has been meeting since the beginning of January in a bid to resolve the country's five-month political crisis.

Al-Bid has been holed up in the southern port of Aden since August 19 and has said he will not return to Sanaa until reforms providing for sweeping political and economic decentralization have been adopted.

'Martyr al-Jihmi' Mourned

JN0901091694 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] The preparatory committee of the [word indistinct] grouping has mourned the martyrdom of Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim al-Jihmi, adviser to the prime ministry and member of the grouping's preparatory committee.

While regretting this incident, which was carried out by vicious hands, the committee hopes that the competent security circles will quickly take the necessary measures, chase the culprits, and bring them to justice, so they can receive a just punishment.

The committee also extends condolences to the martyr's family and kinsfolk. Funeral services for martyr al-Jihmi will be held at the martyrs' cemetery this morning, after prayers at the al-Shuhada' Mosque.

YSP Political Bureau Holds Meeting 6-7 Jan

JN0901095994 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Under brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council and Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] Central Committee secretary general, the YSP Political Bureau held a periodic meeting in Aden from 6-7 January 1994.

The Political Bureau reviewed the overall developments on the Yemeni political scene and the progress of the national efforts being exerted to contain the current political crisis and find objective solutions which will enhance the march of unity and democracy in the country.

The Political Bureau reviewed the results of the current national dialogue among various parties and political forces and the steps that have been taken to resolve the current crisis. Greatly appreciating the spirit and results of this dialogue, the Political Bureau stressed the need to continue the dialogue with a greater vitality so it can achieve its exceptional objectives and tasks.

YSP Issues Statement on Current Crisis

JN0901163894 Aden Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1513 GMT 9 Jan 94

["Text" of statement by YSP Political Bureau at end of its meetings in Aden 6-7 January—read by announcer]

[Summary From Poor Reception] "The Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] Political Bureau held its regular meeting in Aden under brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, the YSP Central Committee secretary general and vice chairman of the Presidential Council, 6-7 January [words indistinct]." The Political Bureau considered the developments that have taken place in the country and discussed ways to settle the current crisis. The Political Bureau highly praised the efforts to render national dialogue a success. "The Political Bureau discussed the manifestations of the continued series of assassinations [words indistinct] and the other national forces [words indistinct] the assassination of struggler [words indistinct] in al-Bayda' governorate on 6 January 1994 in Sanaa, and the continued military mobilization actions and the harassments [word indistinct]. The Political Bureau noted that these practices are viewed as a serious exacerbation of the crisis and are a sign on the increasing role of the quarters and parties that wager on aborting national dialogue [words indistinct] push the homeland towards the brink of a catastrophe and [word indistinct] destructive civil war that will destroy everything and from which only the enemies of the people will benefit."

"The Political Bureau has warned against threats posed by the trend attempting to use the agencies of the united state as a cover to execute the scheme of division, kill democracy," and "destroy the homeland's unity."

"The Political Bureau stresses that these actions will exacerbate the crisis, completely conflict with the results and guidelines reached by the national dialogue committee, and place obstacles in the face of any objective solutions to the current crisis."

The Political Bureau also warns against deteriorating economic conditions and a drop in the citizens' standard living conditions. It also warns against the growing political crisis and deteriorating security conditions.

The Political Bureau also notes that there are "fabricated factors and reasons that are accelerating economic collapse." These include smuggling, currency forfeiting, speculation in currency, mishandling of public funds, and the drop in the value of the national currency. The Political Bureau stressed the need for finding quick solutions to the economic conditions.

"The Political Bureau concludes that the current crisis is a comprehensive one with political, economic, social, and [word indistinct] dimensions and requires quick, comprehensive, objective, and responsible solutions."

"The Political Bureau notes that the only serious solutions to the current crisis lie in preserving unity," and the building of a "democratic, modern, and united state based on a decentralized, democratic system of local government." Such solutions would ensure a higher degree of "political participation by all citizens of the homeland;" help achieve "economic, cultural, and social progress;" and "strengthen unity, and end all manifestations and consequences of division."

The Political Bureau stresses the need to give particular attention to the "issues related to the people's security, freedom, living conditions, and progress."

Finally, the Political Bureau urges "all political forces, parties, and organizations and the masses to display further awareness, cohesion, and unity." It also urges them to

silence the "drums of war," prevent the "conspiracies of partition and division" and to preserve "unity and democracy."

Speaker Affirms House's Role in Defusing Crisis

JN0901212294 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] The House of Representatives' committee assigned the task of finding the facts pertaining to the current political crisis held a meeting under Speaker Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar this evening. House Speakership member brother Muhammad al-Khadim al-Wajih attended.

At the outset of the meeting, the house speaker noted that the House of Representatives, through its sessions and also through the follow-up committee it has formed to find the facts pertaining to the crisis, will continue to play its effective national role to resolve the crisis, given the fact that the House of Representatives is the legislative authority elected by the people. He added: Moreover, it is this house that began the efforts to address the crisis when it issued its statement on the crisis on 5 November 1993 and formed a fact-finding committee from among its members.

The brother house speaker went on to say that the task of addressing the crisis must remain, first and foremost, within the confines of the Presidential Council, the House of Representatives, the Council of Ministers, and the coalition government committees.

The house speaker said: The people who elected us asked us to keep the trust, the significance of which was accentuated when the house members took the oath during its first session. Hence, the house will remain alive. It will continue to hold its sessions, given the fact that it is the representative of the people, an elected body, and the legitimate constitutional authority, which is the guardian of the constitution, legitimacy, law and order, and which oversees all executive organizations.

Afterward, the committee examined various developments and repercussions of the crisis. The debates of the conferees during this session underlined the need to remove the effects of the crisis by resolving the problem of price hikes, halting the decline in the exchange rate of the national currency, promoting security and stability, improving the living conditions of the people, safeguarding Yemeni unity, and consecrating national unity. The conferees also reaffirmed the need to continue efforts to reach drastic solutions to the crisis democratically and objectively, within the constitutional and legitimate frameworks, and in a manner that will rid the homeland and people of the ordeal, as well as the economic difficulties created by the crisis. The endeavor to defuse the crisis, the conferees noted, must also ensure the strength and entrenchment of united Yemen, as well as the creation of a democratic, shura-inspired, civilized, and modern community.

House To Summon Government; Urges Food Subsidies

JN1001133694 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] The House of Representatives this morning held an ordinary session under speaker brother Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-Husayn al-Ahmar.

First, the House reviewed the minutes of its last session, and approved them after correcting some paragraphs. Then, it listened to a letter addressed to the brother speaker from the brother prime minister. The letter contains an apology for the government's failure to report to the House this morning, Monday, 10 January 1994, corresponding to 28 Rajab 1414 Hegira, as it should have done according to a House decision approved in a session held on Wednesday, 5 January 1994. According to the letter, the brother prime minister is currently indisposed.

Following a detailed discussion of the letter sent by Prime Minister brother Engineer Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas, the House accepted this excuse, with the understanding that the House can still summon the government and that a new date will be set by the House to hold a general debate on the government's policy statement and the House's statement on it in an attempt to learn the extent and level of implementation of what was mentioned in the policy statement.

The House also issued the following decisions:

1. The brother prime minister, deputy prime ministers, and all cabinet members can dedicate their time to their missions, powers, and specialities which are constitutionally and legally determined. However, they should not engage in the political forces' dialogue committee at the expense of their responsibilities and executive work. This is because such engagement will obstruct the interests of both the public and the state's official institutions.

2. The House endorsed the government's order to all the officials and employees of the state's administrative bodies, institutions, and organs to proceed with their own tasks, according to one's field of specialization and work. It also endorsed the principle of awards and punishments in this regard without leniency or favoritism.

3. The government needs to subsidize the following basic food commodities: Wheat, rice, flour, and oils, including edible fat, as well as sugar, children's milk, and medicines. The official prices should be shown on these commodities through Yemen. Moreover, there should be supervision of prices to know the extent of abidance by the official prices which are set by the state, represented by the Ministry of Supply and Trade. Legal measures have to be taken against those who violate the official price list for these commodities which are necessary for the living of the public.

The House will resume work tomorrow, Tuesday, morning, God willing.

'Informed' Sources on 'New' Government

JN1001091594 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0830 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] Sanaa, 10 Jan (INA)—Informed Yemeni sources have said that opinions in Sanaa are moving in the direction of forming a new government in the coming phase. Such a government would represent the political parties and forces as part of an approach to resolve the political crisis.

The weekly AL-HIWAR cites these sources as saying that the new government will be entrusted with implementing the political agreement which the coalition and opposition parties are drafting to end Yemen's political crisis, tackle the country's problems, work out development programs, and promote the unity of the state.

Observers here believe that the agreement's articles will ensure the bases for merging the two armies, end the military manifestations throughout the country, entrench security, and crystallize sound national action in the field of news media, economy, and politics.

IAEA To Transfer Enriched Uranium to Russia

NC0901155894 Paris AFP in English 1527 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Baghdad, Jan 9 (AFP)—International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) experts are preparing the transfer of a second batch of Iraqi enriched uranium to Russia, UN sources said here Sunday [9 January].

The team is working at a site near Baghdad and hopes to complete its mission by the end of January, the sources said without specifying the quantity involved.

Last month the same group supervised the removal and shipment by air of 33 kilograms (73 pounds) of irradiated fuel from Iraq to Russia.

In October, IAEA chief Maurizio Zifferero said that some 35 kilograms (77 pounds) of enriched uranium would be transferred to Russia.

The IAEA, a Vienna-based United Nations agency, and Iraq signed an accord in April for the removal of 35 kilograms of uranium. The agreement was reached during a mission of IAEA inspectors led by Zifferero, who said at the time that the operation would cost Iraq several million dollars.

Last November the IAEA shipped 12 kilograms (27 pounds) of non-enriched uranium from Iraq to Russia.

The transfers are in line with UN Security Council resolutions to disarm Iraq after the Gulf war in 1991.

Britain's Archer Continues Tour of Kurdistan

Visits al-Sulaymaniyah

NC0801155794 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1505 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Lord Jeffrey Archer, envoy of British Prime Minister John Major, visited the al-Sulaymaniyah Governorate building yesterday. He was received by Al-Sulaymaniyah Governor Sulayman 'Abdul. Afterward, accompanied by Jabbar Farman, minister for peshmerga affairs, and the governor, Lord Archer visited the al-Sulaymaniyah office of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. He was received by hundreds of people. He delivered a speech stressing that the Kurdish people have many friends abroad.

Afterward, he visited the fourth branch of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan. He then visited the town of Halabjah and the village of Sayyid Sadiq.

Kurdish Leader Seeks End to Embargo

NC0901204394 Paris AFP in English 1856 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Arbil, Iraq, Jan 9 (AFP)—The prime minister of the self-declared Kurdish government in northern Iraq asked his British counterpart John Major to help exempt Kurdistan from a UN embargo against Baghdad, Kurdish sources said Sunday [9 January].

Kusret Rasul sought Major's cooperation in bringing about a partial lifting of the embargo to help "improve the material situation of our people" in a letter handed to Britain's Lord Archer who was in Kurdistan last week.

Lord Archer, better known as the author Jeffrey Archer, addressed the Kurdish regional parliament on Wednesday and delivered a message from Major, recognizing it.

Archer said Britain would contribute through the United Nations, the European Community and directly to the humanitarian aid budget pledged by the international community to the Kurdish autonomous region.

The trade embargo was imposed on Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. The northern Iraqi Kurdish autonomous region is affected by the sanctions, being part of the country.

Chief of Staff Interviewed on Size of Army

JN1001143794 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 5 Jan 94 p 3

[Interview with Army Chief of Staff Iyad Futayyih al-Rawi by Nadiah Shakarah in Baghdad on the 73d anniversary of the Iraqi Army]

[Excerpts] Despite his busy schedule, we have managed to visit briefly with fighter Staff General Iyad Futayyih al-Rawi, Army chief of staff, and hold this interview with him in his office at the Defense Ministry. [passage omitted]

[Shakarah] An historic document dated 1932 lists statistics on the Iraqi Army. It says that when Iraq joined the League of Nations, the Army had only two divisions and only 549 officers, 9,320 noncommissioned officers and soldiers, and 794 volunteers. What is the size of the Iraqi Army now?

[Al-Rawi] From its formation until the 14 July 1958 revolution, the Iraqi Army was a small one, incapable of meeting the national and pan-Arab requirements to defend the Arab nation and serve its national objectives. The colonialists were trying to impose their control over the Army and use it as a tool to protect their colonialist objectives and schemes and crush any nationalist movement by force. After 1958, the Army began to grow gradually with the formation of new divisions. Then, the 17-30 July 1968 Revolution brought to power a nationalist authority that believes in national and pan-Arab objectives. That authority adopted a long-term policy to rebuild the Army on strong revolutionary bases. Thanks to mujahid leader President Saddam Husayn, may God protect and preserve him, the Army became the revolution's striking arm and vigilant eye that protects the homeland and the people's achievements. The Army was organized on modern, scientific bases, and its combat capabilities and technical methods were improved. The formations were significantly enlarged until today when it has become the fourth largest Army in the world after the U.S., Russian, and Chinese Armies. [passage omitted]

Rabin on Peace Talks, Public 'Insubordination'

TA0801105694 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0805 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Telephone interview with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin by Yaron Ben-'Ami and political correspondent Udi Segal on the weekly "In the Current Situation" program; on 7 January—recorded]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Ben-'Ami] Mr. Rabin, do King Husayn's statements about the possibility of a parting of the ways with the PLO and separate Jordanian-Israeli negotiations create a new situation? If that is indeed the case, how does Israel propose to handle things?

[Rabin] We are trying to establish a dialogue with every Arab party to the negotiations on the basis of the Madrid peace conference and the continuation of the talks in Washington. We do not create any sort of linkage between progress with one Arab partner out of the four we are negotiating with. I am referring to Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and the Palestinians. We will make progress with anyone prepared to talk to us with whom we can find a common language, without this being conditional on the state of the negotiations with the other Arab partners. However, it is worth remembering one thing: There is a fundamental difference in the negotiations between us and the three neighboring Arab countries, with whom we seek to sign a peace treaty, and the negotiations with the Palestinians. The Declaration of Principles is not a peace treaty, it is merely an important step toward peace. The title of the paper signed in Washington faithfully reflects the nature of the agreement itself: It is an agreement on an interim accord. We still use old terminology and call it autonomy while the Palestinians and the formal documents at the Madrid conference and afterwards speak of arrangements for Palestinian self-rule.

[Segal] Does King Husayn's declaration of a possible parting of the ways with the PLO perhaps pave the way for a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation in the permanent settlement? Is this not cause for concern? What is Israel's attitude toward this move?

[Rabin] At the moment we are negotiating a peace treaty with three Arab countries and holding talks on an interim settlement with the Palestinians. The Israeli Government has reached no decision on a confederation with Jordan in the permanent arrangement. According to international terminology, a confederation is a framework incorporating two states. Anyone caring to read the Labor Party's election platform and the decisions made at its latest convention will see that there is no mention of a Palestinian state between Israel and Jordan. Therefore, any attempt to deal with issues pertaining to the permanent solution now are wrong. We oppose the Palestinian attempt to raise elements of the permanent solution for discussion in the course of negotiations on the Gaza-Jericho First proposal, which is merely the first step in the interim stage. We firmly and clearly insist on one thing: the negotiations today are over the interim accord. Both sides must keep all their options open for the negotiations on the permanent solution. All the wisdom and logic in reaching an interim agreement first lies in the attempt to examine whether Palestinians and Israelis can achieve peaceful coexistence in Judaea and Samaria. Until we experience whether or not this is possible, it would be a mistake on our part today to deal with elements of the permanent solution or to allow the Palestinians to raise issues pertaining to the permanent arrangement, such as for example, the refugee issue. At this stage of negotiations on the interim arrangement, we are not dealing with the issue of refugees, whether these are Palestinian refugees or Jewish refugees from the Arab countries.

[Segal] At a meeting of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee two weeks ago, Knesset Member [MK] Binyamin Netanyahu pulled out an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Intelligence Branch document warning about the security risks posed by autonomy. Your reaction was, and I quote: With all due respect to the IDF Intelligence Branch, it has been wrong in the past and these are merely assessments. Sir, do you believe that when the PLO assumes responsibility we will be able to count on them? Can 'Arafat guarantee security and deal with the terrorist squads?

[Rabin] Let us separate the substantive part of your question and its introductory sentence. At the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee session, MK Netanyahu did, indeed, mention an IDF Intelligence Branch document which I had not yet seen. I replied that it was the Intelligence Branch's job to present the dangers. I never concealed the fact that any political move carried out by Israel entails some risks. Giving up all of the Sinai Peninsula and erasing all signs of an Israeli presence there also engendered danger. Not only security risks, it also set a precedent regarding the price Israel would have to pay in exchange for peace with other countries. It is the political echelon, however, which makes the decisions. As for the assessments of the Intelligence Branch, whether right or wrong as it occasionally transpires, there is the example of the Yom Kippur War which proves that mistakes have been made, perhaps not in overrating dangers but rather in underestimating them. Now back to your question. First of all, Israel retains responsibility for the security of Israeli citizens and for external security. True, in the situation which we hope will ensue, the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, for example, will control the areas of Gaza city with over 250,000 Palestinian residents. Clearly, in order to control such a population—and because we do not want to place any Israeli soldiers or policemen at risk—there will have to be a Palestinian police force which will be armed with rifles, not sticks. They will not receive their arms from Israel but from another source. All the talk about Israel arming the Palestinian police is simply being fabricated by various elements who are trying to mislead the public with baseless lies. There must be a strong police force. This was already promised—and I believe rightly so—by an Israeli prime minister way back at Camp David. I also think that there should be a strong police force. This police force must take control of the street because if it fails to do so, or if it does not receive strict instructions to impose law and order, the basis for the whole agreement will be undermined.

[Ben-'Ami] Security problems can also arise from the other end. What about the settlers' riots and the calls for insubordination inside the IDF? What about the letter by the reserve officers?

[Rabin] Let me start off by saying that I consider insubordination within the IDF to be totally unacceptable. I was also opposed to it during the Lebanon war. Even if the public was divided, a democratically elected government has the authority to tell the IDF what to do and no soldier has the right to refuse an order. There is nothing worse than calling for insubordination. I find it inconceivable for a soldier to refuse to serve in the territories. There were many cases of soldiers who refused to serve in the territories because the military occupation of another people was contradictory to their political beliefs. It is just as inconceivable for soldiers to refuse any orders except for what the Supreme Court defines as manifestly illegal orders which contravene the humane and legal values we seek to instill in our soldiers.

[Ben-'Ami] What about the settlers' terror activities?

[Rabin] If such things happen, God forbid, it will be Israel's responsibility to deal with it, just as we shall demand that the Palestinian police deal with Palestinian terrorists in the areas under the control of the Palestinian police.

[Segal] Sir, was the release of 101 Palestinian prisoners part of a deal with the PLO to renew the Taba talks? Are further releases of Palestinian prisoners expected in the coming days?

[Rabin] No one informed the PLO of the decision to release over 100 prisoners. I was responsible for this decision. I would like to reiterate our criteria: None of these prisoners belonged to the rejectionist groups which continue terrorist activity, none of them has any Jewish or Palestinian blood on their hands, and most of them were due to be released soon anyway. I would like to remind everyone that Israel is holding between 9,000 and 9,600 Palestinian prisoners and detainees. These are mostly prisoners or detainees still undergoing legal proceedings. These prisoners are held in IDF lockups or in Prison Service installations. On average, over 300 prisoners are released each month when their sentence is completed or when the administrative detention of about 130 or 140 prisoners out of the 9,000 expires. The remainder have either been convicted or are undergoing legal proceedings. We did not release any prisoner or detainee still undergoing legal proceedings. Approximately 200 to 300 prisoners are released each month anyway.

[Ben-'Ami] Sir, you were in favor of negotiating with Syria first. In a week President Clinton will meet with Syrian President al-Asad. Do you expect a change in Israel's relationship with Syria? Do you foresee a possibility of the Syrian track taking priority over the negotiations with the Palestinians?

[Rabin] First of all, I would like to correct what you said. I have always stressed the need to focus on the Palestinian-Israeli issue, at least since the last election campaign and after becoming prime minister. If you watch the television reports on our election campaign you will see that we placed the focus on the Palestinian track and I even announced a timetable of six to nine months that we failed to meet. We failed to meet the target date but we reached an agreement with the Palestinians. I always said that the key for a breakthrough is in the hands of two of our four Arab partners: either Syria or the Palestinians. Why is this? I always realized that Jordan cannot—without getting into the reasons for this now—lead a breakthrough. Lebanon, which, putting things nicely, is very much under Syria's influence, is definitely incapable of such a move. Therefore, the key to any breakthrough is either Syria or the Palestinians. We reached a declaration of principles and we are conducting negotiations with the Palestinians. I will not say things are easier. There have been ups and downs, as I said there would be immediately after signing the agreement in Washington. As for the Syrians, I have still not received an answer to my question. I said earlier that the goal of our negotiations with the neighboring Arab countries was a peace treaty, not some other agreement. To the best of my knowledge, Syria, up to this very moment, has not explained that its interpretation of the term peace is similar to the way we understand it. In other words, borders that are open to the traffic of goods and people, diplomatic relations and embassies, a policy of normalization, and a peace treaty between our two countries that is independent and not effected by our relations with other Arab partners. I would not be wrong to say that up to now, the Syrians have been demanding a full withdrawal and the dismantlement of all Jewish settlements on the Golan Heights in exchange for a peace that does not even include normalization. Al-Asad constantly insists he will not be willing to accept anything less than was accepted by the late Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat. In other words, Israel's return to the international border, the evacuation of all of the Sinai and the uprooting of any Israeli presence there. Al-Asad insists that this is a precedent for making peace, and he is adamant not to receive less even in return for a less extensive peace. At this stage, we have not received a full answer regarding what kind of peace President al-Asad is referring to, and we have certainly not accepted the price he is asking in return for peace. We have accepted the principle of withdrawal on the Golan Heights to secure and recognized borders. We said we would not enter negotiations on the geographical dimensions of withdrawal until we know what kind of peace we are getting in return. As for what will happen at the al- Asad-Clinton summit on 16 January, why should I guess? We only have to wait nine days to find out.

[Segal] Washington pundits believe that the Syrian president will clearly explain his concept of peace with Israel. According to some assessments, he will propose full peace with embassies and open borders. According to your own formula of full peace in exchange for full withdrawal, are you today capable of passing a decision on withdrawal from the Golan Heights?

[Rabin] Up to today, when defining Israel's position, I have never spoken of full withdrawal. If that becomes a problem, we shall have to discuss it. Our position today is in support of a withdrawal on the Golan Heights.

[Segal] Given today's political situation, can you gain a majority for such a decision?

[Rabin] For a withdrawal on the Golan Heights? Yes. [passage omitted]

Rabin: Implementation Depends on Taba Results

TA1001153794 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said today that the implementation of the Declaration of Principles [DOP] with the Palestinians depends on the attainment of an agreement in Taba. Rabin reiterated that there are no sacred dates, and that the basis for the target dates is the attainment of an agreement. Our correspondent Yiftah El'azar reports:

[Begin recording] [El'azar] One would be well advised not to expect a breakthrough in the Taba talks in the next few days, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin stated today. Warning against disappointment, Rabin said that if there is no basis for the continuation of the dialogue with the Palestinians the sides might reach the conclusion that there is nothing to talk about. The prime minister was asked whether Israel would comply with the target date set for the completion of the withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho, and he replied that the target date depends on an agreement being signed in Taba.

[Rabin] I reiterate: There are no sacred dates. The DOP mentions phases and target dates, but the basis for these target dates is the ability to attain an agreement. [Later on in the program, Rabin is quoted as saying that he would rather "not renew the peace talks with the PLO in Washington, as long as the Israelis and the Palestinians do not reach an agreement in Taba."]

[El'azar] Rabin also referred to the security situation, in the wake of suspicions that the murder of a taxi driver in Herzliyya yesterday was committed for nationalistic motives. There are no signs of a rise in the number of terrorist attacks, the prime minister said, and the closure has so far proved itself. At the same time, he noted, we cannot defend ourselves from individuals who cross the Green Line to carry out terrorist attacks.

[Rabin] We have signs that some of the elements opposed to the agreement who pursue terror do not suffice with attacks on Israelis in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza but definitely want to penetrate Israel's sovereign territory.

[El'azar] One must bear in mind that the closure is not hermetical, Rabin said, vowing that the security forces would do their utmost to tighten security. [end recording]

Peres: Position Unchanged Prior to Talks

TA0901165194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1605 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres stated this evening that Israel has not changed its position regarding crossing procedures on the Jordan River bridges and the scope of the withdrawal in Jericho. Mr. Peres made these remarks on the eve of the resumption of the talks in Taba. In its weekly session today, the cabinet heard a briefing on the issue. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz reports from the studio:

[Raz] [passage omitted] Israel is not prepared to change the Cairo understandings, either with regard to the crossing arrangements on the bridges or the scope of the withdrawal in Jericho. This position was unequivocally reaffirmed by Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres.

[Begin Peres recording] The Cairo understandings do not include 'Arafat's observations, that is as clear as day. As for the Cairo understandings, there is the document we issued and the observations of Nabil Sha'th—and they do not differ all that much from each other—and this should be the basis for discussion. [end recording] [passage omitted]

In anticipation of the meeting between Clinton and al-Asad, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin remarked that if the Syrians link peace to the normalization of relations with Israel this would be a change. If al-Asad chooses to maintain the current vagueness, then nothing will have changed, the prime minister said.

Peres: No Target Date for Withdrawal

TA1001131694 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1230 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] Israel will not withdraw from Gaza and Jericho on 14 April, the date set in the Declaration of Principles [DOP] with the PLO. This may be inferred from the remarks of Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, who said today that there is no target date for the withdrawal. Rather, he said, there is an understanding that the implementation of the DOP will last four months after the agreement has been signed. Peres was asked whether that meant that the withdrawal would start toward the beginning of summer, and he replied: We will try to do it earlier.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1300 GMT on 10 January quotes Peres as "voicing his confidence that progress will be made in the Taba talks and noting that the DOP cannot be implemented in one go."]

Talks Said Under Way With PLO on Jerusalem

TA1001122094 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 10 Jan 94 p A3

[Report by Nadav Shragay and Aluf Ben]

[Text] Shmu'el Me'ir, a deputy mayor of Jerusalem on behalf of the National Religious Party, says that he has learned about the existence of an informal Israeli-PLO committee that has already begun discussing the nature of the permanent arrangement in Jerusalem.

Me'ir says his remarks are based on reliable sources from within the system, whose "conscience is bothered by the end-of-season sale the Israeli Government is holding these days on properties including Jerusalem." Me'ir claims that

the committee is drawing lines and maps that will demarcate those areas within the city's current jurisdiction that are indisputably Arab, and that those areas will be handed over to the Palestinians when the permanent settlement is implemented in the city. He claims that this category includes Arab neighborhoods, such as Shu'fat and 'Isawiyah, in which no Jews reside.

As stated, Me'ir refuses to disclose his sources, but he insists that these are trustworthy people who are unwilling to be accomplices in such a far-reaching move which, he believes, means partitioning the city. Me'ir is going to demand an urgent city council meeting. He plans to brief Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert on the matter and to convey his information to ministers and Knesset members.

Reacting to Me'ir remarks, Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin said yesterday that they can be summed up by one word: 'Nonsense.'

Me'ir further asserts that he has learned that in the recently signed Israeli-Vatican agreement, Israel consented—and this consent was not made public—to granting extraterritorial status to Vatican churches and other Vatican properties in the city.

[In a live telephone interview by reporter Hayim Zinowitz on Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0505 GMT on 10 January, Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin says that Me'ir's remarks regarding extraterritorial status for Vatican properties are "sheer nonsense." Beilin adds that "nothing like that was ever agreed" and "the issue never came up." Asked whether Israel and the Vatican have signed an agreement on extraterritorial status, Beilin replies: "There is no such document, unless someone forged one."]

Defense Establishment's View of Talks Reported

TA0601192894 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 6 Jan 94

[Report by army affairs correspondent Roni Daniyel]

[Text] The defense establishment views the discontinuation of the peace talks as an indication of a struggle over negotiating modalities, and not merely details. For the defense establishment, the return to Taba means an understanding with the Palestinians that any agreements achieved there would be final and that it will not be necessary to rush every agreement to Tunis for Yasir 'Arafat's approval or rejection.

The Taba talks will address the Qatif Bloc's area and defense mechanism; road traffic and how it is to be made secure; and that ancient issue of the control in border crossings, including that of Rafah. In all the talks, the Cairo understandings and agreements will be the starting line, nothing else.

If the Taba encounter proves successful both in terms of negotiating modalities and the Palestinian delegation's mandate, the civilian track will be launched in full scope in the coming days.

MK Claims Documents Prove IDF Pullout Date

TA0801121994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Tzomet Knesset Member [MK] Eli'ezer Zandberg said he has documents from the Defense Ministry and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] stating that the evacuation of Army forces from the Gaza Strip will begin on 22 February and take two days. Zandberg asserted that it is now clear that all the disagreements between Israel and the PLO were but a show that was intended to conceal information from the public.

In reaction, Meretz Knesset faction chairman Ran Cohen said that the documents disclosed by Zandberg were bogus. Cohen told our correspondent Hayim Hecht that he had checked with the IDF and the Defense Ministry and was informed that no date had been set for the start of the withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, since the timetable for the evacuation process depended on the results of the negotiations with the Palestinians. This week a Knesset plenum will discuss a motion on the agenda presented by MK Zandberg on the issue of the withdrawal from the Gaza Strip.

'Secret' Ministry 'Autonomy Roads' Map Detailed

TA0701195394 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1830 GMT 7 Jan 94

[Announcer-read report, followed by Gil'ad 'Adin studio report]

[Text] The Defense Ministry has detailed plans for the Judaea and Samaria roads after the Palestinian autonomy is established. Our correspondent has learned that the Defense Ministry has prepared a map showing all the bypass roads that will be paved when the negotiations with the PLO end. Our correspondent Gil'ad 'Adin has the details:

The negotiations on the second stage of the implementation of the autonomy have not yet started, but a map of the autonomy roads is ready. The Defense Ministry defined the autonomy's areas considered dangerous and its presumed borders. The definitions were handed over to the Construction and Housing Ministry, and Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer instructed the Public Works Division [PWD] to prepare detailed plans for paving the new roads.

According to the map of the autonomy roads, 620 km of new roads will be paved. The work will be on an enormous scale, including bypass road for dangerous areas, safe access routes to the settlements in the territories, and roads along the autonomy borders which will serve those wishing to avoid the entire area. The new map was designed to be incorporated into the map of the peace roads, of which we reported some three months ago. That map provided a general plan for roads to the neighboring Arab countries, and not roads leading to specific settlements. The autonomy roads project will cost some 2 billion new Israeli shekels. It is not included in this year's PWD budget, which is why an additional budget is currently needed.

The Defense and the Construction and Housing Ministries are keeping the plan secret. We have learned that a detailed map has been prepared, and now it is clearer what the finance minister was referring to when he said, after the state budget was approved, that an additional budget will be required for plans connected with the establishment of the autonomy.

Ben-Eli'ezer Confirms Map Exists

TA0801193894 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Announcer-read report, followed by Gil'ad 'Adin studio report]

[Excerpts] Construction and Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer this evening confirmed that a detailed plan of bypass roads in the autonomy territories has been prepared for the Defense Ministry. Peace Now announced that if the government stops investing in the territories and direct the funds to other areas, it would correspond with the government's commitments. Our correspondent Gil'ad 'Adin has the details:

A grandiose, multiyear plan which would cost up to 2 billion new Israeli shekels, was how Construction and Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer this evening defined the autonomy road plan. According to him, the plan deals with paving bypass and shortcut roads, as well as works on reconstructing and expanding strategic roads. The purpose is to attain minimal friction between the Jewish and Arab residents of the autonomy area.

The details of the plan are being kept very secret. It is feared that if the road map is exposed, it would reveal the final intentions of the government before the negotiations on the second stage of autonomy have started. The Public Works Division [PWD] refused to confirm that it had prepared the map of the autonomy roads. A contingency plan exists for any eventuality, PWD sources told us, and we will be ready to begin work as soon as we are given the order by Minister Ben-Eli'ezer. [passage omitted]

The map was handed over to the Defense Ministry which, together with the Prime Minister's Office, is to decide on the order of priority for the various projects. If the entire plan is approved, it would cost some 2 billion shekel. In comparison, this is double the PWD budget for works throughout Israel in 1994.

Beilin on al-Asad, Agreement on West Bank

TA0801183094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin said today that he expects President al-Asad to tell President Clinton that he intends to establish full peace with Israel. If Syria is willing to establish full diplomatic relations and open borders, Israel is willing to withdraw on the Golan—not from the Golan—following the formula that the depth of withdrawal equals the depth of peace.

Speaking to our correspondent, Deputy Minister Beilin said that an agreement has been reached with the Palestinians that the entire West Bank will be demilitarized with no Palestinian army or guns, and that Israel will militarily supervise the entire West Bank. At the same time, whether an Israeli military presence at every location in the West Bank is necessary still needs to be discussed.

Rabinovich, Syria's al-'Allaf To Meet in U.S.

TA0701194794 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1830 GMT 7 Jan 94

[Text] Professor Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador to the United States and head of the Israeli team for negotiations with Syria, will come to Israel next week for consultations over the meeting between Presidents Clinton and al-Asad. Our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik reports that, after the meeting, Ambassador Rabinovich will hold a series of tete-a-tete meetings in Washington with the head of the Syrian delegation to the talks, Muwaffaq al-'Allaf.

In Israel, there are rising expectations for a positive shift in the negotiations with Syria following the Clinton-al-Asad summit. A senior political source, however, told our correspondent that the prime minister will have to slow down the pace of negotiations on the Golan Heights because, at this stage, he will be unable to deal simultaneously with negotiations with Syria and the Palestinians.

Minister Denies Decision To Uproot Settlement

TA0901095994 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 9 Jan 94 pp 1, 13

[Report by N'omi Levitsky]

[Excerpt] A decision in principle was made in Jerusalem a few days ago to evacuate the settlement of Netzarim.

Last night, a senior political source confirmed to YEDI'OT AHARONOT that the government intends to evacuate isolated settlements in the Gaza Strip.

The evacuation will be carried out unrelated to the negotiations being conducted with the PLO, and will be implemented within two to three months of the execution of the Gaza-Jericho First agreement.

Netzarim, a small and isolated settlement in the heart of the Gaza Strip, raises obstacles for those planning the redeployment of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] in the Gaza Strip. The most senior security sources advised Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to transplant the settlement inside the Qatif Bloc. Rabin, who made a commitment not to evacuate settlements within the framework of the negotiations with the PLO, refused to order the uprooting at this stage.

Senior defense elements made it clear to the prime minister that leaving the settlement where it is might in the future constitute a security danger and a recipe for needless friction with the Palestinians. The elements also warned that there is no possibility of defending the settlement.

According to the political source who confirmed the report, Rabin agreed in principle to evacuate Netzarim at a later stage and unlinked to the current negotiations with the PLO. [passage omitted]

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0600 GMT on 9 January adds that Minister Yosi Sarid this morning responded to the report by saying that "no such decision was made in Jerusalem, it is currently not on the agenda, and especially not during the negotiations on implementing the Gaza-Jericho First agreement. Nevertheless, it seems that when the issue is brought up in the cabinet, and it is due to be raised in the coming months, many —such as Minister Shulamit Aloni—will support uprooting Netzarim." In a recorded passage, Minister Aloni is quoted as saying: "There are decisions we have put off making, which I think is a mistake. I think Netzarim should have been uprooted, there is no justification for it being situated in the heart of Gaza if we want to return Gaza." Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres also raised the issue in the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee last week. He said Israel would study the cost of defending Jewish settlements in the Gaza Strip located far from the Qatif Bloc.]

Cabinet Given 'Gloomy' Picture of Territories

TA0901122294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Report by political correspondent Shlomo Raz]

[Text] The cabinet meeting has ended. Major General Dani Rothschild, coordinator of government activities in the territories, presented the ministers with a gloomy report on the territories. The economic situation there is deteriorating, Arab laborers are not being employed within the Green Line, there are difficulties in exporting agricultural produce, and the promises to send funds to the territories have not been met. The clear outcome of all this is an erosion of support for the Israeli-PLO agreement. We must remind you that the Taba talks resume tomorrow against that gloomy background, and they will be extensive, at least according to Minister Yosi Sarid:

[Begin Sarid recording] I heard optimistic evaluations by PLO spokesmen about the talks lasting two or three weeks. I would gladly join in their optimism, but knowing all the problems from close up, I am not so sure that we are talking about two or three weeks. I would be very pleased if that happens, but I believe that six to eight weeks is more reasonable. If I am proved wrong, I will be the first to be pleased. [end recording]

Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer hopes an agreement will be reached in Taba.

[Begin Ben-Eli'ezer recording] The message that emerges from the cabinet meeting is that we welcome the resumption of the talks, and hope with all our hearts that this time the Palestinians will realize that time is critical and that Israel is not prepared to give up one iota on security-related issues. At the same time, however, we want to enter into talks which will lead to the implementation of the agreement. [end recording]

We should recall the remarks made by Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres a week ago. He said that Israel will not bank on the issues on which agreement was reached in Cairo—the scope of the withdrawal in Jericho and the procedures for border crossings at the bridges.

Shim'on Shetrit referred to the bazaar atmosphere that characterizes the negotiations and makes progress very difficult. He said the Palestinians do not understand that a handshake and oral agreements are binding.

[Begin Shetrit recording] In the future, I hope that those who conduct the negotiations will understand that we are dealing with an eastern bazaar, in which the other side tries to extract as much as possible all the time. Second, in reference to the formal procedure of approval by the other side, we need Yasir 'Arafat's signature on the document, otherwise he will say it is not binding. [end recording]

To return to Minister Sarid, who referred to the reports about an intention to uproot settlements, and specifically the plan to uproot Netzarim.

[Begin Sarid recording] I do not know what will happen in the future, but I know—and say so in the most authoritative way—that in the current Jericho-Gaza First negotiations there is no talk about transferring or uprooting settlements. Therefore, any report that says otherwise is baseless. [end recording]

In other words, the government plans to leave Netzarim where it is at this stage.

Something else raised in the cabinet meeting were trips to China, which has become the most attractive destination for ministers. Foreign Minister Peres criticized his colleagues for going there en masse. Those who have so far been there are Rabin, Peres, and Ben-Eli'ezer, while those planning to go are Mikha Harish, Avraham Shohat, and Shim'on Shetrit. We will wait and see if Peres' call works.

Two Killed in Inter-Palestinian Clash in Gaza

TA1001141094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] Two Arabs were killed last night in an exchange of fire between two groups of Palestinians in the al-Burayj refugee camp in the Gaza Strip. Our correspondent Nisim Qeynan reports that one of them died of his wounds early this morning at Tel Hashomer Hospital. The body of the second Arab was snatched away by his relatives.

Update on Incidents in Territories 10 Jan

TA1001175894 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] A terrorist attack was foiled today in the local police station in Ramallah. A young Arab woman from Kafr 'Aqab in the Ramallah District entered the station,

pulled out a gun, and aimed it at a policeman. When a security officer pointed his gun at her, she let go of her weapon. She was detained for interrogation by the Judaea District police.

A booby-trapped car was identified and safely defused today in Jerusalem's French Hill.

An aide of the leader of the military wing of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] in Judaea and Samaria was today sentenced by the Nabulus military court to seven years in prison. He had planned to detonate a car bomb in East Jerusalem.

Palestinians Assailed for Collaborator Treatment

TA0901122694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Excerpts] Betzelem, the Israeli human rights organization, has called on the Palestinian political organizations to put an immediate stop to the torture and killing of residents suspected of cooperating with Israeli authorities. At the same time, at a news conference in Jerusalem this morning, the organization criticized Israel's deliberate recruitment of collaborators. Details from reporter Mark Weiss:

At almost every Betzelem news conference over the years, the organization has been accused of avoiding the issue of collaborator killings while concentrating exclusively on human rights abuses committed by the Israeli authorities. Yuval Ginbar from Betzelem denies the accusation. [passage omitted]

Between 750 and 950 Palestinians suspected of collaboration have been killed since the start of the intifadah, many after suffering severe torture. Both Israeli and Palestinian sources estimate that more that half of the Palestinians killed as collaborators did not in fact work for the authorities. According to a sample investigation conducted by Betzelem, many of those called collaborators had committed so-called social or criminal offenses, such as drug-trafficking or homosexuality. Many suspected collaborators were killed without any prior interrogation or judicial proceeding.

Betzelem considers the Palestinian political organizations, whose activists torture and kill, as responsible for these gross violations of human rights, along with the perpetrators themselves. The organization calls on the Palestinian political organizations to put an immediate stop to the torture and killing of suspected collaborators, to sever all financial and organizational ties to groups that commit such acts, and to place suspected perpetrators on trial.

Betzelem also criticizes the Israeli Government for flaunting international law, for what it terms the exploitation and extortion tactics employed to recruit collaborators. The recruitment of agents from the occupied territories by these methods is prohibited under the Fourth Geneva Convention. Betzelem calls on the Israeli Government to end the recruitment of collaborators, to stop using collaborators in illegal actions such as violent interrogations, and to enforce the law equally against collaborators who use violence or commit other criminal acts.

IDF Reacts to Betzelem Report

TA0901202794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has commented on the Betzelem report about Arabs cooperating with the authorities in the territories. It says this is the first time that Betzelem has focused on the activities of Arab terrorist organizations vis-a-vis the internal Arab population. During the intifadah, the IDF says, most of the 964 Palestinians murdered by other Palestinians did not cooperate in any way with the IDF. The Army stressed its obligation to do everything required to support those individuals who have aided the Israeli authorities over the years.

U.S. To Be Held Responsible for VOA Cancellation

TA1001124794 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 10 Jan 94 p A11

[Report by Aluf Ben and Tzvi Zrahya]

[Excerpt] The cabinet decided yesterday that Israel will hold the United States responsible for the cancellation of the VOA relay station project in the 'Arava and the commitments arising from it. Israel will demand U.S. compensation for expenditures caused by the project cancellation and expects the United States to be accountable for the financial commitments of the IBS [not further identified] conglomerate, which was responsible for establishing the relay station.

The cabinet resolution states that Israel has received the U.S. Government's announcement "concerning its request to cancel by mutual consent the 18 June 1987 agreement between the two governments for the establishment of a VOA station in the 'Arava. The Government of Israel will not oppose the request in principle, but in view of the incurred expenses and commitments, the two governments should negotiate an agreement on the cancellation."

The cabinet has been advised that cancelling the project may generate lawsuits amounting to tens of millions of dollars by companies that had been slated to build the station, most notably Elbit. There is also the possibility that the U.S. Administration will demand a refund of their $16 million investment in the 'Arava made upon the signing of the station agreement.

The cabinet decided to appoint an interministerial team to draft the agreement and negotiate with the Americans. The team will be headed by Brigadier General Re'uven Yardor (Reserves), former project director for the Communications Ministry. The team will be be made up of representatives of the Foreign, Finance, Industry and Trade, and Justice Ministries. [passage omitted]

PLO Talks Conclude; Economic Agreement Reached

'Full Text' of Economic Agreement

JN0901122294 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 9 Jan 94 p 28

["Full text" of the "Jordanian-Palestinian economic agreement" signed in Amman on 7 January 1994]

[Text] As a result of the distinguished relations between the fraternal Jordanian and Palestinian peoples based on cohesion and integration; affirming the importance of cooperation in various fields and the need to provide the suitable atmosphere for the promotion of bilateral relations, especially in the economic and social fields; in view of the fact that building their joint future requires the highest degree of economic, social, scientific, technological, and organizational cooperation on both the official and popular levels, and the highest degree of coordination and participation by the two sides on various levels and in all domains, such as banks, development funds, insurance companies, investment and industrial and agricultural commodity production establishments and services in the fiel. of tourism, health, education, reconstruction, construction work, and infrastructure works such as roads, electricity, water, energy, communications and others; emphasizing the desire of both sides to lay down effective bases and rules to facilitate the transfer of funds, labor, commodities, products, and services, the two sides discussed the draft economic cooperation agreement between the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the PLO and agreed that it constitutes an acceptable framework for cooperation between the two sides. In particular, the two sides agreed on the following:

1. After reviewing the 3 January 1994 PLO Executive Committee decision to approve the reopening of the branches of the Jordanian banks which were closed after the occupation, and in light of the their talks, the two sides agreed to reopen the branches of the Jordanian banks closed in 1967 and agreed that the Central Bank of Jordan will be the side accredited by them to arrange for the reopening of these branches and to monitor and supervise their work in accordance with valid Jordanian laws, regulations, and instructions in cooperation with the competent Palestinian body which will be given reports on the ongoing work of these branches. This agreement will continue to be applicable until the Palestinian currency authority is established.

2. Establishing a joint technical committee which will meet regularly to cooperate in planning and coordinating financial, currency, and banking policies and maintaining currency stability during the transitional Palestinian period and until a central Palestinian currency authority is established.

3. The Jordanian dinar will continue to be the legal tender in Palestine until the Palestinian currency is issued. Other Arab and foreign currencies will be used during this transitional period as economic requirements dictate.

4. Cooperating in studies to establish specialized banks in the various fields of developments and participating in these banks as the committee sees fit.

5. Establishing a joint company to promote trade exchanges of national industrial and agricultural products between the two countries and to taking the necessary measures to realize the following:

A. Raising the volume of trade exchanges between the two countries to the highest level possible in accordance with an agreement to be reached later.

B. Establishing a joint free zone in the Jordan Valley For transit trade, industry, and joint investments.

6. During the transitional period, the two sides will facilitate the movements of the Palestinian trade, transportation, storage, and shipping for re-exporting Palestinian products to the Arab states and the rest of the world.

7. Reconstructing the Prince 'Abdallah Bridge, and, simultaneously, expanding and developing other bridges to be operated by agreement between the Jordanian and Palestinian sides to facilitate the movement of people, commodities, and vehicles. The building of additional bridges will be considered.

8. Establishing joint tourist projects in the tourist areas, and cooperation on organizing trips for tourist groups, as well as encouraging, promoting, and publicizing the tourist industries, and considering the possibility of establishing a joint tourist transportation firm.

9. Working out an agreement to organize the exchange of manpower and the rights of workers to compensation and social security.

10. Working out a special agreement to encourage and protect joint investments, and extending all necessary facilities to create climates of incentives for the private sector in a way that will enable the establishment of large and medium investment projects, as well as encouraging the Jordanian and Palestinian capitals abroad to participate in these projects.

11. Encouraging the private sector in both countries to participate in designing and implementing housing and reconstruction projects and infrastructure; namely, electricity, energy, water, and telecommunications, and activating these efforts.

12. Exchanging experience in the field of agricultural development by continuing the agricultural scientific researches and technical experience, and expanding the establishment of joint scientific research centers.

13. Encouraging the private sector to establish joint firms in the Jordan Valley's free zone to store, refrigerate, market, and process agricultural products; namely, vegetables, fruit, animal products, and fish.

14. Coordinating and closely cooperating on enhancing the infrastructure; namely, electricity, energy, water, and telecommunications to realize the common interests through competent organs in both countries to work out the best technical ways to achieve this objective.

15. Conducting full coordination between the two sides in a way that will achieve their common interest, and calling on the six committees emanating from the Higher Jordanian-Palestinian Joint Committee to meet as soon as possible to hold talks and coordinate the issues of Jerusalem, economic cooperation, water, refugees, security, borders, and legislations. These committees will submit periodic reports to the Higher Jordanian-Palestinian Joint Committee.

16. Continuing coordination and consultations as part of the peace process in a way that will achieve the common interest of the Jordanian, Palestinian, and other Arab sides while endeavoring to reach a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace that will secure the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian Arab people, including their right to repatriation, to self-determination, and to establishing an independent state on their national soil, with holy Jerusalem as its capital.

Signed in Amman on Friday, 7 January 1994

[signed] for the PLO, Faruq Qaddumi, foreign minister of Palestine, and acting chairman of the Board of Governors [title as published]

[signed] for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Dr. Sa'id al-Tall, deputy prime minister and minister of higher education

PLO's Qaddumi Cites 'Full Agreement'

JN0801131194 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, left Amman today following a visit to Jordan at the head of a PLO delegation. During the visit, Qaddumi held talks with senior Jordanian officials which resulted in the signing of an agreement on economic and trade cooperation.

Before departure, Qaddumi assessed the results of the meetings of the Higher Jordanian-Palestinian Committee. He said:

[Begin recording] Praise be to God, our endeavors have culminated in complete success after three days of in-depth discussions which were dominated by a spirit of fraternity, openness, and clarity, so that we could establish future relations on firm and strong bases. The outcome was full agreement on the overall future relations between the sons of the one people who are living on the two banks of the sacred River Jordan and also in the Gaza Strip.

This outcome clearly shows that we have common interests and that we should all take care of, promote and organize these relations on scientific bases that conform to the world developments, to the huge economic blocs our people are facing, and to the political challenges which the peace process has imposed on our people. [end recording]

Regarding the mechanism of work for the joint bilateral committees, Qaddumi said:

[Begin recording] These committee have been set up. God willing, they will begin work within one week from now. They deal with seven [as heard] areas: Jerusalem, refugees and displaced people, security, borders, economic cooperation, social affairs, and other walks of life. These committees will begin work calmly in order to achieve the desired results. [end recording]

Al-'Anani on Agreement, Relations

NC0801084594 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Telephone interview with Dr. Jawad al-'Anani, minister of information and minister of state for cabinet affairs, in Amman, by Ashraf 'Abd-al-'Aziz, in Cairo, on the "Dialogue From Afar" program; date not given—recorded]

[Text] ['Abd-al-'Aziz] Would you tell us what happened during the Jordanian-Palestinian talks?

[Al-'Anani] After three days of talks, the Higher Jordanian-Palestinian Committee, chaired by Faruq Qaddumi on the Palestinian side and Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Sa'id al-Tall on the Jordanian side, reached a comprehensive economic agreement that covers all aspects of potential economic cooperation between the two sides during the Palestinian transitional period.

You know that Jordan's bridges have been open to Palestine since 1967 and therefore economic ties have grown. But these ties have been governed by the Israeli domination resulting from the occupation. In the next stage, we are bound to rearrange our relations in line with the new situation.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] There has been talk recently about Jordanian-Palestinian differences on economic cooperation. Can you brief us on the Jordanian and Palestinian views?

[Al-'Anani] Jordan's view is that full coordination is necessary before the completion of negotiations on the transitional stage, particularly in light of the new situation that has emerged since the signing of the Gaza-Jericho accord on 13 September 1993.

The Palestinian side says its top priority is to establish itself and build national institutions and rearrange its economic ties.

We in Jordan say that the issue is more complex that this because Israel already exists and is seeking to impose its views. For example, it wants to make the Palestinian economy one market subject to the Israeli economy, which will naturally affect not only the Palestinian economy but also the Jordanian economy. Therefore, we believe that time is not on our side and that we should make decisions on these issues at the proper time. The disagreement was

mainly over the interpretation of timing. I believe that we have now managed to reconcile the views and that we have laid down the bases for a strong economic relationship that places us in a better negotiating position and enables the Palestinian economy to strengthen its ties with the brothers in the Arab world; Jordan, Egypt, and other Arab countries.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Mr. Minister, did you see something in the Palestinian-Israeli agreement that made you hasten to discuss economic cooperation with the Palestinian brothers?

[Al-'Anani] The Palestinian-Israeli economic relationship has two aspects. First, there is Annex III to the Declaration of Principles of 13 September 1993, which mentions a Palestinian-Israeli economic relationship and establishes several principles for it, particularly during the transitional period. Second, Annex IV mentions something described as a regional economic system and regional projects. In Jordan, we feel that this agreement has created new facts that have not yet been turned into actual projects. Therefore, we wished to quickly establish the foundations of this relationship with the Palestinians, particularly in view of their ongoing economic negotiations with the Israelis in Paris. We have proceeded from the very simple principle that it is necessary to organize the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship before the Palestinian-Israeli one is established.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Let us move to the issue of the Jordanian-Israeli peace negotiations. How much has been done so far?

[Al-'Anani] As you know, one day after the Palestinian-Israeli agreement of 13 September, Jordan and Israel signed a joint agenda. However, no Jordanian-Israeli negotiations are now under way. We are waiting for a new round of bilateral talks in Washington. This is expected in February. At the same time, numerous Palestinian-Israeli committees are meeting in Cairo, Taba, and Paris. Jordanian-Israeli talks must wait for the convening of the 13th round of bilateral negotiations.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] A question now being asked is the status of inter-Arab coordination. Where does it stand now?

[Al-'Anani] Inter-Arab coordination actually needs to be strengthened. It must become more regular and more frequent. Nevertheless, high-level contacts are going on among all Arab countries, not merely the four cordon states negotiating with Israel. Egypt is taking part in these contacts. President Muhammad Husni Mubarak is constantly contacting his brother Arab leaders. Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa is making tours. Jordanian officials are making visits and King Husayn is communicating with President al-Asad and President Mubarak. These are official, high-level contacts. They are necessary and very important because they set the course for coordination. Still, we would like to see more technical coordination so that high-level political decisions can be linked to the technical preparations that set the pace for the actual negotiations. Details are important, you know.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Minister al-'Anani, thank you very much. You are always welcome on the Voice of the Arabs.

[Al-'Anani] Thank you very much. I wish you continued success.

Al-'Anani, al-Nashashibi News Conference

JN0701182094 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 7 Jan 94

[Text] Proceeding from the distinguished relationship between the two fraternal peoples, the Jordanians and the Palestinians, based on cohesion and integration; and to underscore the importance of coordination and cooperation in the various fields, the Jordanian and Palestinian sides signed at the Foreign Ministry today an agreement for economic cooperation, trade and good exchange, investments, industry, agriculture, energy, water, and electricity, telecommunications, communications, and cooperation between the two private sectors in Jordan and Palestine.

The agreement was signed for the Jordanian side by Dr. Sa'id al-Tall, deputy prime minister and higher education minister, and for the Palestinian side by Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department. The members of both sides of the Joint Higher Jordanian-Palestinian Committee attended the signing ceremony.

Following the signing of the agreement, Dr. Jawad al-'Anani, minister of state for cabinet affairs and information minister, said at a joint news conference with Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi, member of the PLO Executive Committee: With the signing of this agreement today, we have placed a first stone on the right path toward the effective and practical coordination that will be translated into practical steps, which, God willing, will have good and positive effects on the common national interests of both the Palestinian and Jordanian people.

Al-'Anani added: This was not an easy achievement. We exerted honest efforts for long hours to reach this agreement. This agreement, in reality, does not reflect at all contradictory desires, but a united desire that we both, on the West Bank and East Bank, have the same interests, particularly since an earnest and required practical coordination has become a pressing need in these circumstances. This is because we are being exposed to many pressures and attempts to affect and encroach on this relationship. This, God forbid, would not help us reach what we want.

The information minister noted that this agreement reassures the citizens in both Jordan and Palestine who have been waiting for such a step in order to be reassured that things between us are in good shape and that we seriously assume our basic mission out of our concern for the interest of both people now and in the future.

Al-'Anani also said: The time spent reaching such results was an opportunity to discuss many issues in detail. Now, we can reach a common basic understanding of the nature of what is going on and reach certain assurances that what we write on paper are practical and applicable ideas so citizens will see them and feel that we reflect their aspirations and trends.

Dr. al-'Anani described this agreement as very good. He added that it constitutes the beginning of a new stage of cooperation and continuous practical coordination, noting that the common interest of both sides, the Jordanian and Palestinian, calls on us to activate the coordination in an earnest way.

The information minister expressed hope that, next week, both sides will begin to discuss other basic issues, such as unifying and coordinating stands in the fields of refugees and displaced people and reaching clear views on the issues of security, borders, and water.

Dr. al-'Anani said that other issues will be discussed after the Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and the Jericho area and when the PLO begins to assume its tasks on the ground. He affirmed that Jordan will be ready to cooperate in accordance with steps that will not lead to any misunderstanding.

Dr. al-'Anani noted that His Majesty King Husayn's instructions and insistence that the coordination should be effective, practical, and tangible have received a positive response from the brothers in the PLO. He added that the Jordanian and Palestinian sides are happy about reaching this agreement which will soon be ready for implementation.

Al-'Anani also said: We have great tasks that are awaiting us in the future. Continuous coordination is a basic part of our work and we are happy that Mr. Yasir 'Arafat, the president of the state of Palestine, has always been with us for consultations, even late at night. Al-'Anani said that the seriousness in this work has produced an agreement which we are proud of.

For his part, Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi, PLO Executive Committee member, said: Today, wishes that have always been in our hearts have been realized; namely, reaching an agreement expressing the aspirations and ambitions of the two fraternal peoples. This agreement represents a basic phase on the road toward building continuous and growing relations.

He added: This agreement looks into ways of coordination to reach joint aims as well as primary issues, such as banks. It was agreed to reopen the branches of the Jordanian banks which the Israeli occupation authorities closed in 1967, to continue dealing in the Jordanian dinar as a circulating currency, and define joint aims in the fields of development, the exchange of trade and commodities, and the movement of people and capital.

He said: The agreement stipulates that the two countries are one market, affirming the importance of joint action in the field of investments in agriculture, tourism, industry, construction, reconstruction, infrastructure, electricity, communications, telecommunications, and water.

Al-Nashashibi noted that the agreement emphasized the importance of joint action and permanent coordination in seven main fields. These are Jerusalem, refugees and displaced person, security, borders, economic affairs, laws and legislations, and social issues such as health, education, and cooperatives.

Al-Nashashibi said: The agreement also affirmed the need for continuous and joint endeavors between Jordan and the PLO to coordinate in the field of pushing the peace process forward to enable the Palestinian people to attain their inalienable national rights, end the occupation, and realize the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from all the occupied Arab territories.

Al-Nashashibi also said that the agreement dealt with issues related to cooperation in the field of agriculture, the transfer of technology, encouraging investments in the private sector, encouraging the Jordanian and Palestinian investors abroad to invest their money, as well as encouraging Jordanian companies to play their role in the process of building and reconstruction. The agreement also dealt with issues related to supervising banking operations and activities in the coming transitional stage. In this regard, a Jordanian-Palestinian technical committee has been formed whose main task is to supervise the monetary, financial, banking, and credit policy in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Al-Nashashibi said that the higher committee which approved this agreement will continue its work and supervise all the abovementioned sub-committees.

Answering a question on the date of implementing the agreement, Dr. al-'Anani said: There are several points in the agreement which will be implemented according to circumstances. For instance, reopening Jordanian banks will be done as soon as possible after some technical arrangements have been made. He said the economic, monetary, and financial climate must be preserved to ensure successful progress of the operation in a manner satisfactory to all of us. As for issues related to trade, it was agreed that the volume of trade exchanges between the two sides will be as broad as possible.

Answering a question on causes of delay in signing the agreement, al-Nashashibi said: There was no substantive reason except the pressure of work which the PLO has been facing during the current phase. This agreement was presented to the PLO Executive Committee but it could not finish studying it because of the stress to which it was exposed. Al-Nashashibi denied that a Palestinian central bank will supervise the monetary and financial policy in Jericho, Gaza, and the West Bank. Such things will be discussed when such a bank is established because this issue is being intensively discussed by the Executive Committee.

Answering a question on the currency to be circulated in the West Bank, al-Nashashibi said that it will be the Jordanian dinar. Foreign and other Arab currencies will be used in accordance with the requirements of economic development in the occupied territories. These requirements will define the types of currencies to be used.

Dr. Al-'Anani said that the joint technical committee will define, study, and supervise means of ensuring currency stability in the West Bank and Gaza to avert any disorder in this operation.

Answering a question on the confederation, al-'Anani said: His Majesty King Husayn's recent speech has been clear in this regard. His majesty said that we leave such a thing for the future and the Jordanian and Palestinian sides will decide the nature of the joint relationship between them.

In a brief speech, Faruq Qaddumi said that this agreement will contribute toward strengthening the fraternal and profound ties that connect us with fraternal Jordan and will strengthen the ties that join the children of the same homeland who are joined together by this immortal river, the holy Jordan River.

Further on News Conference

JN0801122594 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 8 Jan 94 pp 1, 23

[Excerpts] Amman—Jordan and the PLO signed an economic agreement yesterday after three days of lengthy discussions and negotations at the Foreign Ministry. [passage omitted]

Dr. Jawad al-'Anani, minister of information and minister of state for Cabinet Affairs, and PLO Executive Committe member Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi held a news conference after the signing of the agreement to explain its most prominent provisions. [passage omitted]

In reply to a question on when the agreement will be implemented, Dr. al-'Anani said: Many provisions will be implemented in light of the circumstances. We have taken precautions for the forthcoming stage. For example, the reopening of the Jordanian banks will take place immediately after several technical arrangements are made. Also, the technical committee should be formed not only to reopen the banks but also to preserve the economic, monetary, and financial atmosphere that will ensure the smooth running of operations to the satisfaction of both sides. God willing, such a step will be taken very soon.

Dr. al-'Anani added: There are matters pertaining to trade. We agreed that the trade exchange volume should reach the maximum possible, especially since it used to be 300 million dinars. The [Palestinian] brothers said they aspire for more.

Dr. al-'Anani said: As you know, our agreement should take into consideration at the present time the circumstances of the occupation. Therefore, we coordinated our stands so that when we negotiate with the other parties we both proceed from the same stand that serves joint interests, God willing.

On whether major changes have been introduced to the text of the agreement that has been prepared and ready for signature for the past two months, Dr al-'Anani replied in the negative. He said: We developed it in light of what has taken place since that time. But, the basic topics in the agreement were maintained, and other provisions were reformulated to make them more practical, realistic, and effective.

On why the Palestinian side has delayed the signing of the agreement for such a long time since most of the topics remained unchanged, al-Nashashibi said: There is no major reason, other than the pressure of work the PLO Executive Committee experienced at this stage. He added: Rest assured that the agreement was referred to the PLO Executive Committee, which discussed it with a positive approach but did not manage to complete its discussion, because every time it wanted to do so, fresh topics would be listed on its working agenda, and transient and urgent considerations would force it to give priority to these fresh topics. You are aware of all the issues the Executive Committee had to tackle at this stage.

Al-Nashashibi said: We finally realized that we had to sit down here to expedite implementation. The lack of time, other pressures, and a busy schedule are the only reasons for not completing it before. But, thank God, at the first opportunity we had to sit down for three days here, we managed to complete it. Nothing was changed in the essence of the agreement.

On whether the agreement signed between the heads of the Jordanian and Palestinian sides needs to be approved by the leaders to become legally binding, al-Nashahshibi said: The regulations enunciate that when the PLO empowers a team of its members to sign the agreement, then this agreement enters into force.

On whether the Palestinian authorities will superivse the new banks if a Palestinian central bank is allowed to be established, al-Nashashibi said: So far, there is no Palestinian central bank. We will study the situation when such a bank is established. The question of the establishment of a central bank is being studied very carefully. Therefore, since it has has not been established as yet, one cannot say that it has a role to play.

On the use of the Jordanian currency in addition to other world and Arab currencies in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, al-Nashashibi said: There is no need to specify what the other currencies will be. Economic development in the occupied territories will define the type of currency.

As for Dr. al-'Anani, he said: With respect to this issue, we took into consideration what is actually taking place on the ground. The Jordanian dinar was considered as the currency in circulation. We should take into consideration that there are other currencies in circulation such as the Egyptian pound in the Gaza Strip. The U.S. dollar is also used on the Palestinian market. We affirmed that the Jordanian dinar is the currency in circulation, and that for economic requirements, other currencies will most certainly be used. However, the joint technical committee formed between the two sides is the one to study and and secure monetary stability and ensure that no imbalance takes place that would affect this operation.

In response to a question on what King Husayn said about dropping the term confederation from the dictionary, and the PLO stand on that, al-Nashashibi said: In accordance with the clarification that we heard from his majesty the king when he honored us with his meeting with us two days ago, dropping is not the correct word. The major hopes and expectations will be discussed in due time. This is what he meant.

He added: We believe that the brothers in Jordan are committed to the joint struggle for a joint destiny and future, which the two sides will decide of their own free will at the right time. In this context, we are committed to the formula that will be decided by our people. [passage omitted]

In response to a question on the amount of Jordanian currency in the occupied territories and whether it has been decided to set a ceiling for it, Dr. al-'Anani said: As you know, the Central Bank of Jordan is directly responsible for maintaining the stability of the Jordanian currency. We do not issue any bills unless they are sufficiently covered with foreign currency.

He said that about 300 million dinars, or one-fourth of the Jordanian dinars issued, are in circulation in the occupied territories.

On the committees that have emerged from the Higher Committee, Dr. al-'Anani said: Eight committees already exist, but we agreed that there are priorities to which we must pay attention. In other words, the nature of matters and the way things proceed must be taken into consideration. It should be observed that we agree on the topics that each committee will discuss.

He added: These committees will always be there and ready when needed. For, it will be occasionally noticed that matters are interlinked. Take, for example, the movement of individuals between Palestine and Jordan. Sometimes, this will require that security decisions are made. Therefore, the security committee should meet to discuss this matter. This applies to other committees.

He said: Therefore, we will follow a flexible approach. However, we agreed that we should be constantly prepared to meet immediately and regularly to settle these issues.

On the economic priorities, Dr. al-'Anani noted that priorities are of the following sequence: Reopening of banks, trade, investment organization, and both sides' participation in investments when the process of building the infrastructure begins. It has been emphasized that the private sector in both countries will have a key role and will be granted substantial facilities so that it would be able to contribute to the health, contracting, tourist, and industrial sectors, or any other similar investments.

With regard to ports, al-Nashashibi indicated that in principle, it has been agreed to adopt the Gaza and al-'Aqabah ports for the transportation of cargo and passengers.

In response to a question on whether the PLO delegation has come to Amman for coordination and negotiations and to sign, or whether the question of signing was decided during its stay in Amman, al-Nashashabi said that this agreement was discussed by the Higher Committee, not the Economic Committee alone He said that this has given the agreement a larger dimension. Many issues were discussed on the highest levels to come out with this agreement, he noted.

He added: The major mission of this delegation was to facilitate coordination and cooperation between the two countries, and that economic cooperation was one of the topics. Therefore, we have discussed all dimensions of cooperation between the Hashemite Kingdom fo Jordan and the PLO.

He stressed that the objective of the visit was coordination. Therefore, meetings were held at the level of the Higher Committee, something which lent greater importance to the economic agreement. He said that discussions also dealt with ways of promoting bilateral cooperation and coordination in all spheres.

In response to a question on the press statement attributed to President 'Arafat that sooner or later, he will control all banks in the Gaza Strip and Jericho and that Jordan will not have any role, al-Nashashibi said: I have no right to confirm or deny this. However, I believe that such statements do not comply with President 'Arafat's feeling and understanding of the situation.

He added: This is evidenced by the fact that this agreement and the clause concerning banks have been agreed upon with 'Arafat's consent and knowledge.

He said: Naturally, when any authority comes into existence, all institutions become accountable to it and affected by its instructions, laws, and regulations.

On the guarantees for implementing this agreement, Dr. al-'Anani said: There are no guarantees. Everyone came here to discuss the possibility of reaching a viable formula. The way we dealt with these topics and their details leave the impression that both sides are serious about putting the agreement into practice.

He added: There are no guarantees per se, but we agreed that we have joint interests. Therefore, we have approved or adopted nothing which would not be in line with interest of the two sides and two peoples.

On the question of guarantees, al-Nashashibi said: Of course, there are no guarantees as such. But I believe that there is an important guarantee, which is the political will and our actual decisions and interests. These constitute the real guarantees for such an agreement. We have signed of our own free will, backed by the political will and actual interests.

In response to a question on whether the meeting of the economic Palestinian-Israeli committee may affect some articles of the agreement with Jordan, al-Nashashibi said: This Jordanian-Palestinian agreement is the basis. Everything else is extraneous.

Government Denies 'Concessions' Made

JN1001111894 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 10 Jan 94 pp 1, 5

[By Nirmin Murad JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Amman—The government yesterday sought to dismiss criticism that the accord it signed with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on Friday [7 January] was a much watered-down version of the original agreement the two sides reached in October.

"Jordan did not make any concessions to the PLO in the economic cooperation accord. What might appear as concessions in the document are simply a reflection of the political realities of the Middle East peace process," Information Minister Jawad al-'Anani said Sunday.

Dr al-'Anani, one of Jordan's key economic planners in the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations, stressed that the signing of the accord had put an end to sensitivities over separating the Jordanian and Palestinian identities.

Jordanian critics of the accord have contended that the agreement failed to meet expectations for concrete cooperation and coordination between Jordan and the emerging Palestinian entity.

Dr. Fahd al-Fanik, a prominent economist and newspaper columnist, said most of the accord's articles "represented no more than Arabic prose."

"We can practically ignore all the articles starting with the word 'encouragement' as legally meaningless... even the mere encouragement of joint projects will be on hold until another agreement is reached," Dr. al-Fanik said.

Palestinian political observers were earlier quoted as saying Friday's accord cannot be treated as a comprehensive economic agreement but a broad framework of economic cooperation and that Jordan made "major concessions to the PLO."

But in an informal meeting with the press Sunday, Dr. al-'Anani said that the document was not much different from an earlier draft prepared in October. "There were no amendments to the (October) accord. So where are the concessions?" he asked.

Dr. al-'Anani conceded that the agreement did not spell out the modalities and specific mechanisms of Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation, but said that the absence of such details was natural in view of the fact that the PLO and Israel had not finalised an economic accord.

The PLO and Israel are meeting in Paris to work out an economic accord. Israel said two weeks ago that the talks had produced an agreement, but senior PLO officials denied the report and said the proposals discussed during the talks had not been finalised and approved by the PLO leadership.

Dr. al-'Anani said the main point of contention between Jordanian and PLO officials during the three days of talks that led to the agreement was that the draft accord of October did not go far enough in asserting the separate identities of the two sides.

"They insisted on asserting their own identity and on the PLO acting as a government," Dr. al-'Anani said Jordan did not have any problems in this context, he added, but that there are issues that had to be determined before Jordan and the PLO went to further economic talks with Israel and this could not wait.

The minister explained that the issues of "identity" had overlappings with the workings of a sovereign authority, and this, at this point in time, was not a subject which Israel would discuss.

As such, he said, the economic accord has now set a base for both sides in negotiating with Israel.

He said the PLO's delay in signing the earlier economic agreement was also prompted by a Palestinian belief that such a detailed agreement should only be signed and implemented when the Palestinian authority takes control on the ground.

The PLO felt, according to Dr. al-'Anani, that the economic agreement "was not wholly implementable before the PLO takes authority on the ground."

Jordan, he said, took into account the Palestinian argument but still wanted to "set the rules for economic dealings between Jordan and Palestine within the framework of what can be implemented if we take into account the situation in the occupied territories."

Jordan, Dr. al-'Anani added, felt that there had to be a Jordanian-Palestinian accord that would allow both sides to negotiate with Israel "with this accord back in their minds."

Critics of the accord, such as Dr. al-Fanik, charge that the accord did not meet minimum coordination requirements and that the stipulation that Jordanian banks can open branches in the occupied territories could have "been taken for granted because Israel, the actual authority, approved it."

Saying that the accord amounted to "a contract to enter into a contract, which is of course no contract," Dr. al-Fanik lambasted the accord as "hollow."

"It serves to document a lack of real agreement," Dr. al-Fanik said adding that the "level of cooperation in the agreement is lower than the level of cooperation with the U.K., which allowed Jordanian banks to operate in Britain indefinitely and would welcome joint investments and consultations any time."

Dr. al-Fanik argued that when the accord allowed the Jordanian dinar to continue in circulation as a currency it did not provide for anything positive. "Even Israel did not outlaw the dinar during 27 years of occupation. The new thing here is that use of the dinar will be discontinued as soon as a Palestinian currency is issued, and that other Arab and international currencies will also be used."

Dr. al-'Anani, in his briefing to journalists, dwelled on this particular point as one that had both an economic *and political* message. Dr. al-'Anani argued that if the Palestinian authority only allowed a Jordanian currency to be used "it could be understood to be a sign of Jordanian authority."

Allowing other Arab and international currencies to be in circulation in territories under Palestinian authority, Dr. al-'Anani said, is dictated by reality and therefore the accord specified that "a joint monetary and financial committee will be set up to cooperate in both countries in order to agree on financial monetary and banking policies during the Palestinian interim period, and until the central Palestinian monetary authority is established."

The accord continues that the "two sides also agree to cooperate in order to maintain the value of the Jordanian dinar and exchange rates and manner of dealing with these currencies."

"This stipulation guaratees that policies that will hurt or adversely affect our monetary policies or currency will not be agreed upon," Dr. al-'Anani said.

He also said that the accord was specific in allowing the use of "Arab and international currencies" which precludes the use of the Israeli shekel which is neither Arab nor international.

But he said Jordan understood that it could not insist on the use of the Jordanian dinar as the only currency in circulation when "the Egyptian pound is being used in the Gaza Strip. Any country in the world deals with international currencies in trading."

But it is issues like this one, and the more pressing issue of Palestinian refugees with Jordanian or Egyptian travel documents, which has made Jordan accept the formation of a four-member committee that would include Jordan, the PLO, Egyptian and Israel to discuss issues interlinked among the four countries, according to the minister.

Although the four-member committee has yet to be formed, Dr. al-'Anani said, it had become apparent that the four parties have to coordinate on monetary as well as refugee issues.

Dr. al-Fanik's argument that the accord only called for the "establishment of a committee to encourage trade exchange" rather than specifically calling for "a unified market as the public was told," was also refuted by Dr. al-'Anani's explanation of working within the "realm of what is possible."

"What we aimed for is to put in place an economic accord that would set the priniples of coordination between Jordan and Palestine that would take into account whether it can be implemented or not," Dr. al-'Anani said.

He explained that some stipulations of the accord, such as the one on opening banks branches in the territories, "could be implemented immediately and that is why we are moving on it."

He said that in other sectors, such as trade, there were problems on the ground that were directly tied to Israeli occupation and the delay in the transfer of authority.

"Trade from the West Bank to Jordan is now in place, but trade in the opposite direction is facing problems as a result of the Israeli occupation." Dr. al-'Anani explained.

"What the accord did was to set the principles that Jordanians and Palestinians agree on but that cannot be implemented until the negotiations with Israel are concluded," Dr. al-'Anani said.

"Some things can be implemented now and other things can only be implemented later but we have set the general arrangements for them in the accord," he explained.

Dr. al-'Anani also pointed out that because of the multifaceted intricacies of the Jordan-PLO accord, Jordan ralises that at one point "there will be a need for the three to sit together,"—Jordan, PLO and Israel. He said he did not know when this need would be translated into practical steps but that the issues on the table indicate that "the issues before us may require sitting down and discussing them together."

Sultan al-Hattab, a columnist for AL-RA'Y newspaper who is close to the Majali government, wrote Sunday that the agreement "boosts Jordan's political credibility, strengthens the value of the dinar and opens the doors for future cooperation," Mr. al-Hattab said the government and the prime minister were keen on reaching the agreement and had carefully chosen the team that negotiated with the Palestinians.

He said that the agreement should serve as a model for other Arab countries to emulate since agreement among Arabs helps the Palestinian negotiators.

Mr. al-Hattab said that after the King's speech earlier this month Jordanian and Palestinian politicians, thinkers, parliamentarians, bankers and businessmen started urgent consultations that helped lead to the agreement.

He said that Jordanian and Palestinian negotiators had "dealt a blow to the economic annex to the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles" and replaced it with a Jordanian-Palestinian agreement.

Ministers Satisfied With PLO Economic Accord

JN0801170994 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1530 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Amman, 8 Jan (PETRA)—This morning, in a session led by Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, the Council of Ministers discussed the agreement signed yesterday by the Higher Jordanian-Palestinian Joint Committee. The Council of Ministers expressed its satisfaction with the signing of the agreement, which is in the interest of the two fraternal Jordanian and Palestinian peoples.

The Council of Ministers also listened to a detailed report by Interior Minister Salamah Hammad on his participation in the recent meetings of the Arab interior ministers in Tunis.

PLO Economic Agreement Seen as 'Step Backward'

JN1001103294 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 10 Jan 94 p 22

["Highlights" column by Dr. Fahd al-Fanik: "A Disappointing Agreement"]

[Text] The only thing that the Jordanian-Palestinian 7 January agreement did was to cancel the previous genuine cooperation agreement, replace it with unbinding rhetoric, and make the two peoples believe there is an agreement.

Except for the reopening of branches of some Jordanian banks in the West Bank, the new agreement does not commit either of the two parties to anything. Even the reopening of branches had already been arranged, since Israel, the party with the authority, has allowed this. The governor of the Central Bank of Jordan has already announced that the reopening of bank branches has nothing to do with the Jordanian-Palestinian agreement. What is new in this respect is that these branches will operate temporarily until the establishment of a Palestinian monetary authority. In other words, the agreement means that Jordanian banks will operate in the West Bank until the self-rule authority is able to prevent them from doing so.

Except for this, no agreement was made on anything. In fact, there has been a retreat. The agreement stipulates that the Jordanian dinar shall "continue" to be used in Palestine. But this has been the case all along. Even the 27-year Israeli occupation has not prevented this. What is new in the agreement, however, is that the dinar will cease to be used once a Palestinian currency is issued and other Arab and international currencies, such as the dollar, are introduced according to economic needs. This means the agreement is a step backward.

The rest of the agreement does not represent a binding contract; it is a contract to enter into a contract. There is nothing in the agreement about considering the two markets as one. It merely stipulates that a joint committee shall be established to promote trade. This will be done according to a future agreement. Until this happens, what we have is merely intentions and not contracts.

All other articles of the agreement are a good example of Arabic rhetoric. We can easily delete all articles that start with the word "encourage", since they are of no good and are not binding. In fact, one of the articles stipulates concluding an agreement to encourage "joint" investments. This means that even encouragement is not a reality until it is agreed upon in the future.

Some other articles start with the words coordination, cooperation, and consultation. These serve only to throw dust in the eyes and pass up the last chance. Negotiators from both sides have let the two peoples down. The agreement is hollow and bolsters the lack of agreement and cooperation. Under the agreement, the level of cooperation is less than that of Jordan and the United Kingdom, which allowed Jordanian banks to operate in Britain and would like to promote joint investments and coordination in all areas.

Officials on Prospects of Arab Reconciliation

NC0901093194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0752 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Excerpt] Amman, 9 Jan (MENA)—Jordan's King Husayn has stressed that the unity of the Arab nation requires the renewal of mutual confidence among Arab brothers and the removal of obstacles that have marred Arab solidarity.

Out of his interest in Arab reconciliation, King Husayn in his recent statements and speeches has called for Arabs to proceed from the concepts of pan-Arab security, joint interests, and a common future to find a solution to the various strategic problems. King Husayn hoped that inter-Arab meetings would be held and ranks unified so that the Arab nation could stand up to the challenges facing it.

For his part, Jordanian Prime Minister Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali said that he hopes inter-Arab reconciliation can be achieved soon to confront the challenges facing the Arab nation.

In remarks made to a MENA correspondent in Amman, Dr. al-Majali said that Jordan is eager to maintain good relations with all the Arab states and is doing its best to achieve that goal.

Jordanian Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Ma'n Abu-Nuwar described the current state of inter-Arab affairs as catastrophic. He called for renouncing inter-Arab differences and avoiding unilateral decisions. He said Arab decisions must be collective, as they used to be in the past, which would give the Arabs great political weight.

According to Dr. Abu-Nuwar, the Arab region as a whole will face tough policies [as received] as a result of the extremely rapid developments in this region. This, he added, requires the establishment of a new Arab order that can achieve understanding and fraternity. [passage omitted]

King To Go To U.S. for Medical Checkup

JN1001093794 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 10 Jan 94 p 1

[Excerpt] Amman (J.T.)—His Majesty King Husayn left Sunday [9 January] for Britain en route to the United States for a medical checkup and a possible meeting with President Bill Clinton.

Officials who spoke on condition of anonymity said King Husayn, 57, will travel on to the United States for an examination at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesoda, where he underwent cancer surgery in Aug. 1992.

The Monarch goes to the clinic for routine checkups every six months, but this time he might also undergo surgery for an ear infection, officials said.

The palace official said the King may meet with President Bill Clinton during his two week stay in the United States.

The meeting with Mr. Clinton will follow the U.S. President's talks with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in Geneva on Jan. 16. The King last met Bill Clinton at the White House on June 18.

The Jordan News Agency, PETRA, reported later that their Majesties King Husayn and Queen Nur arrived in London. [passage omitted]

King, Yemeni President Exchange Views on Phone

JN0901063894 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0500 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Yesterday evening, His Majesty King Husayn received a telephone call from his brother His Excellency Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Yemeni Presidential Council.

During the conversation, the two leaders exchanged views on the distinguished relations between the two fraternal countries, and on caring for the unionist and democratic achievements. These achievements constitute a pan-Arab objective which the two countries are seeking to realize.

The two leaders also exchanged views on Arab and regional issues of common interest.

U.S. Congressional Team Arrives Under Heavy Guard

NC1001102994 Paris AFP in English 0957 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] Al-Masna', Lebanon, Jan 10 (AFP)—A US congressional team swept into Lebanon in a heavily guarded motorcade on Monday [10 January] to search for clues to the fate of six missing Israeli servicemen, an AFP correspondent reported.

They arrived from Damascus in US embassy cars and crossed at this border post, 80 kilometres (50 miles) east of Beirut, which was guarded by 50 Lebanese troops.

The motorcade, flanked by 10 jeeps carrying members of the Lebanese army's special forces, then headed for the nearby village al-Sultan Ya'qub, where three Israeli soldiers went missing during a battle with the Syrians in 1982.

Syria agreed in December to assist the congressional team to try to shed light on the fate of the six men, a move Israel hailed as a step forward for the peace process.

Only airman Ron Arad is believed to be still alive.

The Americans met families of the missing men in Israel on Thursday, and had talks in Damascus on Saturday with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

Beirut Radio Reports Arrival

NC1001101294 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1000 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] A U.S. Congressional delegation seeking information on Israeli soldiers missing in Lebanon for 12 years arrived in al-Biqa' today. The delegation was received at the Lebanese-Syrian border by a high-ranking Lebanese Army intelligence officer and a senior diplomat from the U.S. Embassy in Beirut.

Team Collects Bone Samples

NC1001125794 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] A U.S. Congressional delegation gathering information on Israeli soldiers who went missing in Lebanon 12 years ago arrived in al-Biqa' today. Senior Lebanese Army intelligence officers and a high-ranking U.S. diplomat received the delegation at al-Masna' on the Lebanese-Syrian border.

The delegation began its mission with a visit to 'Ayta al-Fakhkhar, where it met the mayor and the parish priest. The delegation visited the town's cemetery and took a sample of bones.

At 1315, the delegation left for al-Sultan Ya'qub for a meeting with some of the town's inhabitants. The delegation seeks to gather information about the fate of missing Israeli soldiers in Lebanon.

Hizballah's Consultative Council member Nabil Qawuq today held a news conference in which he called for the release of all the Lebanese, Palestinian, and Arab detainees in Israel in return for the release of an Israeli soldier held by Hizballah. He reiterated Hizballah's refusal to negotiate with the U.S. Congressional delegation.

U.S. Team Departs for Damascus

NC1001150194 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1430 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Excerpts] A U.S. Congressional delegation today made a tour of al-Biqa' as part of its quest for information on Israeli soldiers imprisoned or missing in Lebanon. The team met with a number of Lebanese and Syrian officers in al-Biqa'. During the tour, the team was accompanied by six military vehicles carrying special units from the Lebanese Army as well as an armored vehicle that belongs to a U.S. security team.

Shaykh Nabil Qawuq, Hizballah Consultative Council member, held a news conference in Sidon in which he called for the release of all Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners held in Israel in exchange for releasing two [as heard] Israeli soldiers captured by Hizballah. Shaykh Qawuq denied that Israeli pilot Ron Arad is being held by Hizballah, adding that knowing his fate is a matter that concerns Israel. He also denied any direct contacts between Hizballah and the U.S. Congress. He noted that the United States is a full partner with Israel and therefore cannot act as a mediator. [passage omitted]

According to the latest reports, the U.S. team concluded its visit to al-Biqa' at 1500 today and left for Syria. The team is supposed to hold a news conference in Damascus to announce the results of its visit to Lebanon.

Committee Denounces Visit

NC1001062494 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0530 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] The follow-up committee in support of Lebanese detainees in the Zionist enemy's prisons has denounced the visit of a U.S. Congressional delegation to discuss the fate of missing Israeli soldiers while it ignores the fate of hundreds of Lebanese detainees in al-Khiyam prison [in Israel's security zone in south Lebanon] and the occupied territories' [Israeli] prisons.

In a statement issued today, the follow-up committee said the humanity of the U.S. Congressional delegation is confined to Israeli soldiers while the fate of 300 prisoners in Israeli prisons is ignored. For over nine years Israel has refused to allow the International Committee of the Red Cross to visit al-Khiyam prison. And over 165 Lebanese have been held in the enemy's prisons since the 1982 invasion. Israel is also holding the bodies of 125 martyrs.

The committee said this shows the inhumane nature of the U.S. stance, which uses Israeli double standards and views our issue with an Israeli eye.

The committee called on the Lebanese Government to adopt a firm stance on the international silence regarding the issue of the detainees.

Hizballah on U.S. Delegation in Syria, Lebanon

Official Rejects Meeting Delegation

NC0801144794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1330 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Beirut, 8 Jan (MENA)—A political official from Hizballah today restated the party's rejection of any meeting with a delegation from the U.S. Congress to discuss the fate of the Israeli soldiers who are missing in Lebanon.

'Ammar al-Musawi, deputy head of the Hizballah political bureau, told MENA in Beirut today that the present visit to Damascus by a party delegation is part of the constant consultations and meetings with Syrian officials to discuss local and regional developments. He denied that the meetings seek to make any contacts or arrange meetings with the members of the Congressional delegation visiting the Syrian capital at present.

Asked whether Hizballah has agreed to let Syrian officials act as mediators between Hizballah and the Congressional delegation to discuss the missing Israeli soldiers, al-Musawi said: The brothers in Damascus have not approached us about the possibility of holding a meeting with the Congressional delegation or about their readiness to mediate in the matter.

Al-Musawi pointed out that the party has no objection to discussing the issue of the missing Israeli soldiers provided that the discussion is conducted through UN-affiliated humanitarian organizations, like the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Human Rights Organization.

He said that the party has repeatedly emphasized that it has nothing to do with the missing Israeli pilot Ron Arad. All we have are two Israeli soldiers who were taken prisoner in 1986, he said.

The Hizballah official said the U.S. Administration and Congress are biased toward Israel and hence not qualified to discuss the issue of the missing Israelis, particularly since they both totally ignore the issue of the missing Lebanese nationals and the detainees in Israeli prisons.

The Congressional delegation arrived in Damascus yesterday from Tel Aviv to discuss the fate of a number of Israeli soldiers who are missing in Lebanon, in the wake of a promise by Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad to U.S. President Bill Clinton to facilitate the U.S. team's visit.

Reports have noted that the U.S. team arrived in Damascus at the same time as a senior Hizballah delegation was visiting the Syrian capital. Both sides, however, denied holding meetings.

Lebanese newspaper AL-SAFIR today reports that the Hizballah delegation had returned to Beirut the evening before last. However, AL-SAFIR adds, the party delegation returned to the Syrian capital yesterday in the wake of high-level contacts held yesterday morning.

Meanwhile, official Lebanese sources refused to comment on the possibility of a visit to Beirut by the U.S. Congressional delegation to meet with Lebanese officials. The sources stated that no arrangements have been made for such a visit.

Official Denies Reports of Meeting

NC0901071394 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] The U.S. team investigating the fate of Israeli soldiers missing in Lebanon is expected to arrive in Beirut today. The team held talks in Damascus yesterday with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

Meanwhile, Hizballah Deputy Secretary General Shaykh Na'im Qasim has denied that Hizballah officials met with the U.S. Congressional team in Damascus to discuss the issue of the Israeli soldiers. Shaykh Qasim said that Hizballah is against meeting with any U.S. team because the Americans are a party to the problem, like Israel, and therefore are not qualified [to mediate].

Al-Khalil Comments

NC1001061394 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0515 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] A U.S. Congress delegation entrusted to determine the fate of six Israeli soldiers missing in Lebanon will arrive in Beirut today.

According to Hizballah sources, a Hizballah delegation in Damascus for the past two days has met Syrian officials but no member of the U.S. delegation.

The U.S. delegation was expected to arrive in Lebanon yesterday afternoon but the visit was postponed until today following contacts between the Lebanese Government and the U.S. Embassy in Beirut.

The delegation is scheduled to meet Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri and Lebanese areas and villages. It is unlikely that Speaker Nabih Birri will receive the U.S. delegation.

Sources close to 'Allamah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah say Fadlallah is not interested in the delegation or its mission. According to diplomatic sources, Israel has conveyed an offer to the delegation saying it is ready to release all the Lebanese and Palestinian detainees once Israeli pilot Ron Arad is released.

Hizballah leaders have said they refuse to meet the U.S. delegation face to face but noted that this [communication] may take place through friendly powers.

Hizballah Political Bureau Chairman Husayn al-Khalil said there is no connection between Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah's current visit to Damascus and the visit conducted by the U.S. Congressional delegation. He added that Nasrallah's visit was scheduled a week ago for talks with Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al- Halim Khaddam. Al-Khalil said: Khaddam did not discuss this issue with us and no efforts are being exerted in this regard.

Al-Khalil said Hizballah officials refuse to meet face to face with any U.S. official but he expressed willingness to look into the issue through an honest mediator who is not biased toward Israel. Al-Khalil said: We cannot give the Americans the honor of negotiating with us in this regard.

Al-Khalil said any party wishing to play this [mediation] role should guarantee the release of all the Lebanese and Palestinian detainees captured in Lebanese territory, including Shaykh 'Abd-al- Karim 'Ubayd.

Al-Hariri on Talks with Syrian President

NC0701152294 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 7 Jan 94

[Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has stated that his meeting with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad dealt with the internal situation in Lebanon, issues of common interest, the regional situation, the scheduled summit meeting between U.S. President Bill Clinton and President al-Asad, and the insistence of Lebanon and Syria on total Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Lebanese and Syrian territory.

Regarding the agreement to establish a joint Lebanese-Syrian power station, Prime Minister al-Hariri said it is a practical measure to implement the Brotherhood, Cooperation, and Coordination Agreement between the two countries.

Prime Minister al-Hariri added that the government's efforts for development and reconstruction are manifested daily through the projects which are being implemented. He noted that the political situation is cohesive as a result of consultations and understanding among the constitutional institutions.

Dallul on Explosions, Clinton-al-Asad Summit

JN0801193994 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 6 Jan 94 p 3

[Interview with Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul by Walid Shuqayr and Muhammad Shuqayr in Beirut; date not given—individual correspondent not identified]

[Excerpt] [Correspondent] What are the circumstances surrounding the smashing of the network suspected of being responsible for the explosions in Tripoli and Sidon?

[Dallul] The aim seems to be to hinder the process of reconciliation and fence-mending in Lebanon. Security organs have, for some time, been following leads in this case. We have identified certain people—manipulated from outside the country—targeting certain positions, including commercial businesses in Tripoli and Sidon and Lebanese Army, and, at times, Syrian Army positions. Such incidents began to happen in rapid succession, particularly in Tripoli and Sidon, aiming at certain targets in particular. Nor did they target only stores selling alcoholic drinks. They also selected targets of a special nature and belonging to members of certain religious communities in particular. We had to pursue the matter. Having followed numerous leads, security forces busted the bulk of the subversive networks. There has not been any explosions in Tripoli or Sidon since.

[Correspondent] Don't you think that these explosions must be viewed within the context of a plan to destabilize Lebanon in the run-up to the al-Asad-Clinton summit? And what do you think about reports of attempts on the lives of al-Asad and Clinton and al-Hirawi?

[Dallul] Talk about attempts on the life of President al-Hirawi is nothing new; it dates to 1991. I don't know why it is being raised now. I think that raising the subject at this point in particular is calculated to create a climate of panic and fear. As to why that is, the aim is manifold: For one thing, to undermine al-Asad's position ahead of his scheduled session with President Clinton, so Lebanon becomes a liability for the Syrian leader. For another, to deflect attention from the stalled Gaza-Jericho accord, especially given the fact that Lebanon, as a democracy, affords the right and regionally unmatched climate for the media to disseminate such reports. Third, the idea is to undermine Lebanon's negotiating position, especially after King Husayn of Jordan criticized the Gaza-Jericho agreement [as published] and the PLO and the way it handled the negotiations, and adopted Syria's and Lebanon's line. For us, this is a key issue. The U.S. line has, throughout, been to support Israel's argument that it needs a breather to absorb the Gaza-Jericho accord before progress can be made on the other tracks.

The Americans were a bit doubtful that the Gaza-Jericho first option could advance without parallel progress on the other tracks. Our argument, and that of the Syrians', was that, unless accompanied by progress on the other tracks, the Gaza-Jericho accord, stood no chance. Now, the Gaza-Jericho accord has proved a losing bet. There is now a consensus on the need for movement on the other tracks.

[Correspondent] Is it fair to draw the conclusion that the activities of these subversive networks were to counteract opposition to the Gaza-Jericho agreement?

[Dallul] I don't want to divulge secrets just yet. However, the security organs investigating the explosions will before long reveal facts to the news media if they think it necessary. The explosions did not appear out of the blue. They destroyed business premises and other property, and were calculated to advance specific objectives. The circles with a vested interest in destabilizing and undermining Lebanon and al-Asad's position as the date for his summit with Clinton draws near, will go to great lengths to promote the interests of the other side.

We are not pointing accusing fingers at anyone in particular. However, there are many forces that reckon they can use the Lebanese arena to advance their strategies.

[Correspondent] A person has been killed and another wounded on the Darb al-Sim [name as published] east of Sidon. Reports say they are Palestinians and they were carrying explosives. Have you got any information about them and the side to which they belong?

[Dallul] It is premature to disclose this information. Investigation and arrests are still under way. The issue is related to more than one event, and secrecy will benefit both the investigation and the issue.

[Correspondent] Are you optimistic about the possible results of the 12th round of negotiations?

[Dallul] Certainly, because the Syrian and Lebanese tracks cannot be separated. President al-Asad stressed this personally and refused to separate the liberation of southern Lebanon from that of the Golan.

Regarding pessimism or optimism, Resolution No. 425 was issued by the Security Council and not by the UN General Assembly. I believe it constitutes a confusion and a setback in the Lebanese policy but not a disaster because we have a Security Council resolution. We went to the negotiations under the Madrid formula and after receiving letters of assurance from the sponsors of the conference, the United States and Russia, which dealt with Resolution No. 425 and its implementation. Were it not for this resolution, we would not have taken part in the negotiations. Hence, the issue is related to a certain mechanism that will exist. It is certain that the upcoming summit of President al-Asad and President Clinton implies optimism and lessons to be learned. In other words, the steadfast, rather than those who are loitering at the gates of the White House and the gates of embassies, always succeed.

President al-Asad is the only leader in the world who meets the U.S. President in the middle of the road. This has not happened to any president in the world. All leaders support al-Asad, and the meeting is a victory for President al-Asad because he still controls matters despite reports and allegations that Syria and Lebanon are in trouble and that the Gaza-Jericho option has stolen the limelight and will lead to peace at the expense of the Golan and southern Lebanon.

This is not true at all, and the upcoming meeting in Geneva proves that the weight is still here and not there. The Syrian and Lebanese tracks should move together to achieve progress in the Gaza-Jericho track. If the Syrian and Lebanese tracks do not achieve progress, the Gaza-Jericho agreement will soon fail.

President Clinton will not come to a meeting unless he believes he can push matters toward peace in the Middle East. Otherwise, the move would weaken his position and not that of al-Asad, who is still steadfast and adheres to a certain position. Therefore, Clinton may have become confident that he can force Israel to offer realistic concessions or persuade it of such a need—concessions which are Arab rights and which the Arabs want to regain. Without these, he cannot attend any summit because it will be a big failure for his policy, in addition to his repeated failure in Somalia, Bosnia- Herzegovina, and other states. He also has domestic and foreign problems and he cannot afford another big defeat like this.

If the Geneva conference succeeds, it will cover all his defeats because the results of the conference will be much more bigger than what is taking place in Somalia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, or any other country in the world. [passage omitted]

Editorial Views Al-Asad-Clinton Meeting

NC1001094394 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 8 Jan 94 p 1

[Mahmud Mashmushi editorial: "The Geneva Summit and Syria's Role in the Region"]

[Text] Ahead of the summit between Presidents Bill Clinton and Hafiz al-Asad on 16 January, U.S. officials want to point out that the summit would not have been held without earlier consultations touching on an "agreement" on achieving what a U.S. presidential adviser in the past few hours described as "substantive progress" on the Syrian-Israeli track and consequently the Lebanese-Israeli track.

In conversation, U.S. officials do not hesitate to brandish the "terrorism list" that they prepared themselves and according to which they have classified the world. They keep reminding Syria that it remains on this list and that Hizballah and other organizations working against the Israeli occupation of south Lebanon are being directly supported by Damascus with the blessing and nonobjection of Beirut.

With this two-faced stance the Americans are sitting on the fence, as the popular saying goes. They are not opening the door completely to Damascus and Beirut but they are not closing it completely. In common parlance, this is called "blackmail" or "bargaining." In politics it is called "gathering paper" and "negotiating from a strong position."

It might be comprehensible and even logical for the Israelis to resort to this method of dealing with an Arab party, including Syria and Lebanon. But it is incomprehensible and illogical for such behavior to come from the United States, which presents itself sometimes as an "honest mediator" and at other times as a "full partner" in the peace process. It is also incomprehensible and illogical for successive U.S. Administrations to continue this policy if they really want to close the file of 50 years of war in the Middle East. Such a policy leads to further Israeli intransigence and to keeping the file open.

Assuming that the U.S. logic is correct, "Arab terrorism" is new to the region. Given the age of the crisis and the wars it has spawned, terrorism was first introduced by the Zionists. Hizballah and the various Palestinian and non-Palestinian organizations before it won't be the last if no "just, comprehensive, and permanent" settlement is reached.

No one doubts the importance of this summit for settling the Arab-Israeli conflict and for the future of the region in this transitional phase in a world with one superpower. But the world might see the reemergence of two superpowers, even three, four, or five superpowers.

President al-Asad is the kind of leader who does not view tomorrow as the next 24 hours, but measures it by decades and generations in human history. This has always been his problem, not only with the United States and the West, but also with his Soviet friends.

The Geneva summit in one week's time might be an opportunity for President Clinton, the leader of the sole superpower, to get acquainted with President al-Asad's concept of Syria's "basic role"—to which U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher referred yesterday—not only in a settlement, but in the regional landscape after a settlement and under the new world order.

Egyptian Envoy Conveys Message on Peace Process

NC0701150194 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 7 Jan 94

[Text] Egyptian Ambassador to Lebanon Abu-Zayd 'Umar has conveyed a verbal message to Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz from his Egyptian counterpart regarding the peace process. 'Umar said: We are eager to have some exchanges of information and views between the two ministers as part of the continued consultations and coordination among the Arab capitals concerned with the peace process.

Junblatt on Vatican-Israel Ties, Peace Process

NC0901145794 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 1230 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Statement by Progressive Socialist Party Leader and Refugee Affairs Minister Walid Junblatt; place and date not given—read by announcer]

[Text] Local and regional developments require a pause to examine certain basic facts and to explain certain points.

1. If the Vatican's policy has been criticized, this is because we look at the Vatican as one of this world's states. We distinguish between this state and Christianity, which is one of the heavenly religions. However, it is our duty to draw the Vatican's attention to the dangers involved in making peace or normalizing relations with the state of Israel and admitting, one way or another, the commission of a sin against the Jewish people.

The state of Israel was proclaimed as a result of the Western Nazi's persecution of the Jewish people. And thence came the tragedy of the Palestinian people. Today the Vatican recognizes the state of Israel. This recognition may involve a second crime against the Arab people, with all their subdivisions and sects. We are entitled to draw attention to the possible political, ideological, and cultural implications of that recognition for the Arab world.

2. The stand taken by the Coptic Church, led by struggler Pope Shanudah, reiterated that the danger involved in normalizing relations with Israel—with Zionism—will harm Christians and Muslims alike. Pope Shanudah's stance is a historic one that goes back to pharaonic times and the Jews' exodus from Egypt during Moses' time.

The Copts are the heirs of the Pharaohs, the original Egyptian natives. Even after Arab and Islamic conquests, the Copts without hesitation stood by Egypt's rulers, Arabs and Muslims alike, to confront foreign invasions, Crusades and otherwise. It is no coincidence that Salah-al-Din built them a church close to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem—the Dayr-al-Sultan Church. It is also no coincidence that Coptic figures assumed high- ranking positions, including ministers of finance and war during Salah-al-Din's time and later during Muhammad 'Ali's time. The name of [former Egyptian Prime Minister] Makram 'Ubayd was associated with that of Sa'd Zaghlul in rejecting the British mandate. This genuinely nationalist church has taken many other historic stances. The latest of these was when Pope Shanudah rejected the Camp David accords and was exiled by al-Sadat to the desert.

That is why we always distinguish between the policy of the church, whether in the Vatican or in Lebanon, and the Christian people. We affirm that the return of the refugees will continue at the various levels and that it will not be affected by a statement made here or there.

We appeal to the Egyptian opposition not to attack the Copts. Negotiations were forced on the Arabs by the United States. But the future of Arabs, Muslims and Christians, and the future of the Islamic region, are still in our hands. If we act properly, we can stand fast, even in peace, against the Zionist political, cultural, and economic hazards.

In the cultural fields, it is necessary to consolidate the cultural immunity, in Asyut and elsewhere. The battle is with the Egyptian regime, its foolish rejection of dialogue with the opposition, and its persistence in carrying out executions. The battle is not and will not be with Egypt's Copts.

3. These historic points make it incumbent on us to draw up an Arab Islamic confrontation plan that goes beyond tactics for talks in Washington and elsewhere. This plan should involve the Christian, Islamic, and even some struggling Jewish sects that reject racism, in confronting Zionism. Not all Jews are Zionists; and it is not right to generalize. In history, prominent strugglers in the communist, socialist, and world labor movements, as well as imperialism-resisting movements, were Jews.

A plan to guarantee political immunity must be developed, because Israel will only seek to destroy the region and divide its people into tribes, clans, and sects so that Jerusalem can become another Mecca, or the political and economic center for Arabs and Muslims.

Containing such a hazard would make confrontation much easier, even if Israeli flags were temporarily hoisted in some Arab capitals.

As far as the economic aspect is concerned, only an Arab, Islamic common market extending from Iran to the Islamic states in Asia Minor and Turkey can balance the Israeli

strategy of seeking, among other things, to control the Arab and Islamic market and steal our wealth.

These are some of the basic things that should be developed before it is too late to protect the Christians and Muslims of the Orient from the hazards of peace or settlement with Israel.

Fadlallah Backs Iran Against 'World Arrogance'

LD0701223194 Tehran IRNA in English 1625 GMT 7 Jan 94

[Text] Beirut, Jan 7, IRNA—Leading Lebanese Muslim leader al-'Allamah Seyyed Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah said in his Friday prayer sermons here today that the world Muslims should be on the side of Islamic Iran in its encounter with the attacks of world arrogance.

He said the word 'fundamentalism' is a result of the western propaganda and has been used with the idea of discrediting the political opposition to the west.

Fadlallah said Arab governments should learn a lesson from what has befallen the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and learn also that their recognition of the Zionist regime will offer them only infamy and wretchedness.

Meanwhile in the northern Lebanese city of Tripoli, leader of the Islamic Unity Movement of Lebanon, Sheykh sa'id Sha'ban, said during his Friday prayer sermons today that the United States and other arrogant world governments are drafting a scheme with which to pit Muslim and Arab nations against one another.

He criticized the Arab governments that promote the goals of the United States.

Sha'ban said had the resources of Muslim governments been devoted to the promotion of the Islamic movement the world would now have witnessed the creation of a big Islamic force.

Lebanese Forces Deny Attempt to Kill al-Hirawi

NC0801080894 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Statement by the Lebanese Forces' Central Information Agency issued on 8 January—read by announcer]

[Text] Some media organizations have recently leaked fabricated news on an alleged attempt to assassinate President Ilyas al-Hirawi in 1990-1991 [date as heard]. The reports made implicit and sometimes explicit references accusing the Lebanese Forces of being behind the alleged attempt. In view of the persistent reports on this issue, despite the denial made last week by presidential sources, the Lebanese Forces finds itself compelled to announce the following:

1. The contradictory information contained in the leaked reports regarding the alleged attempt to assassinate the president shows that the reports are not valid. One of the fabricated reports spoke of an attempt against the president's life in his office in the temporary presidential headquarters in al-Ramlah al-Bayda', another report mentioned the Cabinet meeting room, and others mentioned his house in al-Hazimiyah.

2. Such media schemes are part of the ongoing efforts to cause confusion in the public and create an atmosphere of mistrust among official, political, and party leaders. The Lebanese Forces views these schemes as an attempt to undermine national unity, internal peace, and public stability.

3. On this occasion, the Lebanese Forces would like to reiterate its positions on the Lebanese legitimate authority established under the National Accord agreement. The Lebanese Forces also would like to remind everyone of its repeated calls on all parties to get involved in national reconciliation and join the legitimate institutions, which would be the strongest proof of the invalidity of the fabricated news about imaginary operations and attempts. Such news only serves the interests of those who are trying to cause new rifts within the Lebanese official body at a time when the officials who are the subject of such rumors know what is happening.

4. The insistence of treating the Lebanese Forces as a former militia, disregarding the vast political current it represents, seeks to undermine its role and image by searching in the past for twisted and untrue incidents to use against it in the present. This is proof that some people are adamant not to accept the realities of coexistence, accord, and political and democratic practices, as stipulated under the law and guaranteed by the Constitution.

5. While expressing its deep regret for the failure to comply with the great national decision to close the chapter of war with all its details and to engage in public affairs, the Lebanese Forces calls on all Lebanese to live up to the current stage and to concentrate their efforts on exposing the schemes hatched against Lebanon at present and in the future. Instead of attempting to distract attention from the real dangers facing Lebanon and its people, efforts should be made to reveal the real perpetrators and planners of recent bombings, such as the one against the Phalangist Party headquarters, as well as other incidents that have sought to disrupt security.

Israeli Shelling, Overflights Reported

NC0701173394 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 7 Jan 94

[Text] According to the latest reports from the south, Israeli forces in al-Zaffatah bombarded Iqlim al-Tuffah villages and heights, particularly Mlita, Jabal Safi, al-Luwayzah, and al-Jabal al-Akhdar. Israeli forces located in 'Alman pounded the al-Litani River basin and the outskirts of Zawtar al-Gharbiyah and Zawtar al- Sharqiyah. Israeli vehicular movements were spotted in the area.

A formation of Israeli military aircraft flew two sorties in the morning and afternoon over al-Nabatiyah and Iqlim

al-Tuffah, staging mock raids and drawing antiaircraft fire. Meanwhile Israeli warplanes broke the sound barrier over Beirut and al-Biqa'.

According to arrivals from the occupied border strip, the Israeli forces reinforced their positions in the area and brought in several Merkava tanks and seven artillery pieces of various calibers and stationed them on the al-Khiyam plain and Tallat al-Shariqah.

Israelis Shell Areas; Resistance Attacks Patrol

NC0901125694 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Our correspondent in al-Nabatiyah has reported that the Israelis, who are deployed in Qal'at al-Shaqif, have been raking Mazra'at al-Hamra', Zawtar al-Sharqiyah, and Zawtar al-Gharbiyah since 1300 today with large-caliber machine guns. The Israelis also bombarded Mlita, al-Luwayzah, and Jabal Safi at 1030 today. Meanwhile, Israeli troops raked the areas around Sujud.

Israeli warplanes broke the sound barrier over Beirut at 1130.

The Islamic Resistance has declared that its fighters have carried out an operation against an Israeli patrol on 'Arqah road. Several members of the patrol were injured.

Furthermore, the Amal Movement said that one of its units attacked the Rshaf position, noting that its fighters clashed with the soldiers manning the positions, inflicting losses on them.

Commentary Views Upcoming Summit, Peace Talks

JN0801170594 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1233 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Station commentary]

[Text] As the date for the Syrian-U.S. Geneva summit approaches, political contacts and moves are increasing. U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said that the United States attaches great importance to the meeting between Presidents al-Asad and Clinton due to Syria's basic role in the peace process and to the expected results of the meeting in terms of pushing the Middle East peace process forward.

The Americans, in general, think it likely there will be substantive progress after the summit. However, we do not want to prejudge things or express excessive optimism due to Israel's history of destroying peace opportunities and creating obstacles. Progress in the peace process ultimately hinges on a change in the Israeli policy toward implementing UN Security Council resolutions and recognizing the formula of a just and comprehensive peace in the region. No one sensed this so far. Moreover, observers agree that Israel will not submit to the resolutions of international legitimacy and will not put aside the policy of prevarication and procrastination without an effective and decisive U.S. role that puts an end to Israel's evasion of these resolutions.

Syria has dealt with the issue of peace in the Middle East with absolute sincerity and positiveness. Syria's contribution has been effective and fruitful, as the world, including the United States, attests. Syria facilitated the convocation of the Madrid conference when Israel closed all doors. And since the sixth round of talks, Syria has presented constructive and balanced proposals. Syria also twice helped the United States save the peace process from collapse. The first time was when Rabin's government sent large forces to southern Lebanon and committed a wicked barbarian aggression that led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Lebanese civilians. The second time was when the Washington talks were halted as a result of the separate deal in Oslo and when Israel overtly declared that it is not concerned with the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, thus obstructing the peace talks in Washington.

The Oslo deal reveals an ambiguous and incomplete agreement, for which its two sides; that is, the Palestinian and Israeli sides, have conflicting interpretations. This agreement was rejected by the Palestinian @people in the occupied territories and the diaspora since it contradicts the Security Council resolutions and does not meet the minimum level of rights and ambitions. It was not to be nice that Warren Christopher visited the region and held lengthy talks with President Hafiz al-Asad in Damascus; talks that were crowned by the arrangement of a summit in Geneva.

The United Stated realizes that separate deals cannot achieve peace and that there is no alternative to returning to the basics of the Madrid conference, the Security Council resolutions, and the formula for a just and comprehensive peace which Syria continues to call for.

Out of the above comes this not-so-optimistic outlook expressed by Damascus and other Arab capitals. The United States' reaffirmation of the formula of a just and comprehensive peace and of the need to implement Security Council resolutions is a positive factor that helps put the peace process on the right and beneficial track. However, one must not forget that Israel has a long record of striking at the peace opportunities, aborting the peace efforts, and containing the U.S. stands.

It is no coincidence that Israeli officials expect the situation to heat up in southern Lebanon on the eve of the Syrian-U.S. summit. In most cases, Israel has resorted to escalation whenever there are signs of real progress. Throughout the past, Israel sought to diminish Syria's role, cast doubts on Lebanon's effectiveness, and convince the United States to concentrate its efforts on the Gaza-Jericho agreement. However, the events revealed to the public that only a just and comprehensive peace can save the Middle East from the whirlpool of conflicts and wars and that separate deals do not lead to peace but add more to the serious tension in the region.

President Clinton, who will begin a tour of Russia and many European countries today, will surely listen to statements that will reinforce the United States' conviction of the need to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on Security Council resolutions and the land-for-peace principle. President Clinton will find out that President al-Asad is completely willing to push the peace process forward and achieve tangible results based on Security Council resolutions. Syria is eager to achieve peace inasmuch as it is eager to restore its territories and end the Israeli occupation of all Arab territories. Peace is synonymous with justice. Justice stipulates the removal of the Israeli occupation so every party can restore its rights.

Summit Called 'Historic Opportunity'

JN1001150594 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1235 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: A few days before the anticipated summit meeting between President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton, eyes are directed toward Geneva in anticipation of results that might prove decisive in the Middle East peace process that has been stumbling for over two years. While the world looks to this summit and its outcome with hope and confidence, only Israel seems to hope that the Geneva summit will not achieve any results that might advance the peace process.

Israel, which was forced to join the peace process under international pressure and did so with the hope of disrupting it from within, does not wish the summit success because such success will undoubtedly reflect positively on the peace process and give a strong push toward the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace based on

the resolutions of international legitimacy and the land-for-peace principle. It is only natural to expect that Israel might do anything in order to confuse the picture and sabotage the expected results of the summit in advance.

The Tel Aviv rulers, who tried to delude the world into believing, after the Gaza-Jericho agreement, that peace has been established in the Middle East, are only seeking to strike separate and partial deals and avoid a comprehensive solution as stipulated by the initiative undertaken by the two cosponsors and on whose basis the Madrid conference was held. Israel's adherence to partial solutions, its continued occupation of Arab territories, and its establishment of settlements on these territories are considered obstacles hampering the peace process and preventing any progress in talks.

The international community, led by the American sponsor, stressed the need to find a comprehensive solution and noted that settlements are an obstacle to peace. It also welcomed Syria's position and the paper it presented during the sixth round of Washington's bilateral talks, considering it an objective paper based on the relevant resolutions of international legitimacy and the land-for-peace principle. Nevertheless, Israel stood against the resolutions of international legitimacy and evaded the Madrid formula and work for a comprehensive solution. It publicly states that it will not withdraw from the Arab territories it occupies and that it is ready for a withdrawal in the Golan and not from the Golan. All this clearly indicates that Israel is not serious in its quest for peace. One who wants peace should unequivocally announce his readiness to restore rights to their owners and to withdraw from the occupied Arab territories. It is neither reasonable nor logical for Israel to ask for land and peace together because no one in the world would approve of this.

Syria and the Arabs are not ready to cede an inch of the occupied Syrian Golan or any usurped Arab right. There is no doubt that the U.S. Administration is fully aware of the Syrian position, which is based on the principles of history, geography, right, and justice. U.S. President Bill Clinton may have something new to energize the peace process on the basis of Resolutions 242 and 338 and the principle of land for peace. Syria is ready to listen to the ideas of the U.S. President and his convictions, but not on the basis of ceding what we struggle for and believe in. The anticipated Syrian- American summit is an historic opportunity to advance the peace process. Upon his meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad, President Clinton will be reassured about Syria's desire for a just and comprehensive peace to which the region's peoples aspire. He will also make sure of the Syrian desire to open all avenues leading to this peace. What remains to be seen is the actions of the U.S. Administration, which declared itself a fair and honest partner in the peace process, toward the party that placed hurdles and set ambushes along the path of peace. Only then can one talk about a new and serious trend toward establishing the aspired peace in the Middle East.

Russian Envoy Delivers Message From Yeltsin

JN0801134294 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' today received Russia's ambassador in Damascus Aleksandr Zotov who conveyed to him a message from Russian President Boris Yeltsin to President Hafiz al-Asad. The message deals with the peace process and bilateral relations.

Khaddam Receives Bahraini Foreign Minister

JN0901171294 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received Bahrain's Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Mubarak Al Khalifah, at 1630 today. The meeting was attended by Muhammad Hamad al-Muhaymid, Bahrain's ambassador in Damascus. Talks covered the Arab situation, the latest developments in the peace process, and relations between the two fraternal countries.

Afghanistan

Thousands Flee During Truce; Pakistan Offers Aid

BK0801143894 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] In Afghanistan, after seven days of intense fighting, the cease-fire agreed between the rival factions is holding. Thousands of people are fleeing the capital, Kabul. The truce came into effect at 0600 today. The cease-fire appeal was made by Pakistan to evacuate diplomats, aid workers, and the wounded to safer places. Pakistan had urged the warring factions to start negotiations for resolving the present crisis. A convoy of about 70 vehicles carrying foreign nationals and diplomats has left Kabul. Thursday's bombardment has caused extensive damage in the center of the city. Markets and shops are ablaze and the streets are littered with debris.

Pakistan has offered to use its good offices to end the fighting. According to informed sources, Iran, Turkey, Libya, and China have asked Pakistan to take the first step and try to convince the warring factions for a complete cease-fire. Iran and Saudi Arabia will later join these efforts to bring normalcy in the war-torn country.

Kabul Truce Said Extended 24 Hours

LD0901183094 Tehran IRNA in English 1749 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Kabul, Jan. 9, IRNA—The truce in force between the warring Afghan factions until 6 a.m. local time Sunday was extended to 6 a.m. Monday, it was announced here Sunday.

A 24-hour ceasefire was agreed by the warring factions on Saturday as a result of appeals by the Iranian Foreign Ministry in order to evacuate those injured in six days of deadly fighting between the forces of President Borhanoddin Rabbani and Abdul-Rashid Dostam.

During the past 24 hours residential areas and the district around Kabul airport were evacuated.

Corpses of innocent people killed in the crossfire between the two sides still litter the streets.

All government offices and radio and t.v. stations have suspended their regular services. Foreign embassies have been closed and diplomats are leaving the capital before the ceasefire ends.

Convoys of foreign diplomats leaving the war-torn city has made people worried of the prospect of possible renewed outbreak of civil war.

IRNA reporter who saw the area said that the ruins and debris cover a vast area and would take decades to rebuilt.

Kabul Cease-Fire Ends

BK0901110294 Hong Kong AFP in English 1018 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Kabul, Jan 9 (AFP)—Fresh fighting erupted in Kabul Sunday ending a 30-hour ceasefire.

Two people were killed in Microryan district, the scene of some of the worst fighting last week, sources said, while others reported that fighting also resumed around noon Sunday (0730 GMT) in Kabul's volatile southeastern districts.

The fresh fighting ended an exodus of civilians from the capital who had been taking advantage of a 24-hour ceasefire which officially expired at 6.00 a.m. but had held for several more hours, sources said.

It also came as some 65 diplomats, United Nations personnel and some foreign nationals reached the northwestern Pakistani city of Peshawar from Kabul.

The diplomats include Iranians, Libyans, Indians, Turkish, Somalians and Palestinians who temporarily closed their missions in the Afghan capital.

Government: Plot To Oust Rabbani Behind Clashes

BK0801095594 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 8 Jan 94 p 12

[Text] Islamabad—The Afghan government is claiming that fighting in Kabul, which entered its seventh day on Friday, was prompted by a thwarted plot to oust President Borhanoddin Rabbani.

Government sources claimed that Rabbani's arch rival Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar, aided by powerful militia leader Gen Rashid Dostam, a close Rabbani ally until last Saturday, and the Wahdat militia had planned to move their joint forces into the city to capture the Presidential Palace.

The government said opposition, who apparently gained an edge when Dostam switched loyalties and attacked government forces, had hoped to replace Rabbani with Sebghatollah Mojaddedi.

The government alleged the plot called for elevating Dostam, a former communist general, to be defence minister while Hekmatyar would remain prime minister.

Asked to comment on the government claim, the spokesman for Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party of Afghanistan], Haji Mangal Hussain, said: "We have been openly asking that Rabbani must step down. If he does so, Hekmatyar will also resign."

Opposition and government sources said fighting, which showed Thursday night, resumed early Friday with both sides trading heavy artillery and rocket fire.

However, heavy snow and fog prevented either side from using aircraft to stage attacks.

Dostam, the only non-governmental commandar to have an air force, has been using his planes to bomb government positions in and around Kabul.

He claimed on Thursday to have gained complete control of the northern Afghan city of Mazar-e-Sharif.

The continued fighting has prompted Pakistan, Iran and the UN Secretary General's representative in Afghanistan to call for a ceasefire and peace. Islamabad had called for a 24 hour ceasefire, to begin at 2300 PST [Pakistan Standard Time], to permit the wounded, diplomats and UN personnel to be evacuated form Kabul.

"Pakistan is deeply concerned over the increase in serial bombardment posing a great danger to the civilians living in Kabul, and has urged all sides to hold political talks", the spokesman said.

Opposition sources in Peshawar said Rabbani has sent his family to Pakistan.

Hekmatyar Criticizes Government in Sermon

LD0801161994 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Dari to Afghanistan 0800 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Led by brother Hekmatyar, the country's prime minister, the Friday prayer has been said with participation of many noble and muslim people of the Charasiab district in Kabul Province, officials of Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party of Afghanistan], jehadi commanders, and mojahedin, in the grand mosque of the temporary headquarters of the premiership. A correspondent of Message of Freedom Radio and Television reports that in the first sermon of the Friday prayer brother Hekmatyar delivered a comprehensive speech.

In a section of the speech he said: [words indistinct] There should have been a government in Kabul but there is no administration nor government. Over the past 20 months there has been no security even around the Arg [presidential palace] nor were the property, dignity, and life of the people safe. Brother Hekmatyar added: Unfortunately the other side has opted for the path of force, deception, and broken promises. A ceasefire came to force in Tagab, but they started fighting in Kabul a short time after that. For [words indistinct] we proposed a plan but the other side rejected it. They wanted [word indistinct] or Khiarkhan [a district northwest of Kabul] government to continue. Tagab blood had not yet dried up when they started more bloody fighting in Kabul.

The prime minister said: [words indistinct] every force and mojahedin who believes in God and pities the nation shall take each other's hands and take steps for a final action. God willing the present fighting is the final battle which will resolve the crisis of the country. Concluding his speech brother Hekmatyar said: All those equations which ensured the chance of the coalition's survival have been disrupted.

India

Jammu, Kashmir Leader Returns, Holds Talks

BK0801040994 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1615 GMT 7 Jan 94

[Text] Speaking to reporters at Nandial yesterday, Mr. Narasimha Rao said the government is taking all steps necessary to combat terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and that elections will be held there once a conducive atmosphere prevails.

[Begin Rao recording] I said we will have to deal with terrorism, transborder terrorism, exported terrorism, all that is going on there. We have to control it, create conditions of law and order so that we could proceed toward a democratic process, which that particular state has not had for some time. [end recording]

Political activity has gained momentum in Jammu and Kashmir with the former chief minister, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, returning to the state after a stay in the United Kingdom. On his arrival in Jammu today, Dr. Abdullah held detailed discussions with senior party colleagues and reviewed the political situation. Talking to newsmen, Dr. Abdullah said that he will reactivate the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference in the state. He said New Delhi has succeeded in exporting to the international community Pakistan's role in aiding and abetting terrorism in the state. Dr. Abdullah, however, said a lot still needs to be done to fail Pakistan's designs on Kashmir.

Meets With Rao To Discuss Peace

BK0901164694 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference president, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, has expressed the hope that significant results in curbing militancy would lead to restoration of normalcy in the Kashmir valley. Dr. Abdullah met the state governor, General K.V. Krishna Rao, in Jammu today and discussed measures for early restoration of peace in the troubled state. The former chief minister also complimented the governor on the peaceful resolution of the Hazratbal crisis.

Meanwhile, the 21-member coordination committee of different political groups of the state have accused some foreign powers of conspiring to divide Jammu and Kashmir. The convenor of the committee, Dr. Bhim Singh, said in Jammu that the committee urged the government to initiate a dialogue with the leaders from the Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh regions to find a lasting solution to the present turmoil in the Kashmir valley.

The Jammu and Kashmir government today announced the setting up of a five-member high-level committee for reorganizing and strengthening the state police force to meet the challenges of militancy. An official spokesman said in Jammu that the committee headed by Mr. (Viranga Ivalli), Inspector General CID [Criminal Investigation Department] has been asked to submit its reports by March 31.

Kashmir Leader Appreciates Clinton Letter

BK0801162494 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] In occupied Kashmir, the All Party Hurriyyat Conference called for a strike and demonstrations tomorrow to protest Indian atrocities and to mark the anniversary of the ascension to heaven by Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. These demonstrations are also designed to protest the continued siege of the Hazratbal Shrine, which the people visit to pay respect to the sacred relic—a hair from the beard of the holy Prophet Muhammad, may the blessing and mercy of God be upon him. This year, the people will not be able to visit the Hazratbal Shrine because of the siege laid by Indian forces.

Meanwhile, 20 people have been killed and several others arrested in the fresh operations carried out by occupation forces in the occupied valley. An Indian military vehicle was destroyed and two soldiers were killed in a land mine explosion in the Nawanshahr area. In another operation, the freedom fighters damaged the water supply system of Punch Cantonment. According to another report, the freedom fighters attacked a military position with a hanH grenade in the Charasa area of Srinagar, wounding a number of soldiers. There are also reports of clashes between the freedom fighters and the Indian forces at (Zomaran Top) of Doda District, in which several soldiers were either killed or wounded.

Syed Ali Jilani, a leader of the freedom movement, in a press statment has appreciated the sentiments expressed by President Clinton in his letter to Dr. Ghulam Nabi Fai, the director of the Kashmir-American Council. Jilani said it is the result of the unprecedented sacrifice of the Kashmiris that the United States and Western countries have begun to take note of the Kashmir situation.

Mohammad Farooq Rahmani, the Jammu and Kashmir People's League, has appealed to the Kashmiri people to observe Indian Republic Day on 26 January as a black day. He said on this day, normal life activities should be suspended and all lights kept switched off in the evening, to prove that the future of India and Kashmir is different from each other. Rahmani has also appealed to the people of Azad Kashmir to express solidarity with their brethren living on the other side of the cease-fire line.

Six Dead in Continuing Kashmir Protest

BK1001145094 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] Reports from occupied Kashmir speak of widespread demonstrations and strikes against the Indian military siege of Dargah Hazratbal [shrine] to prevent the devotees from ziyarat [paying respect to] of mue-i-mubarak [holy hair] on the occasion of Merajunnabi [anniversary of prophet Mohammad's ascension to heaven].

The demonstrations were particularly violent in Srinagar, Baramula, Kupwara, Anantnag-Islamabad, Sopor, Badgam, and Pulwama. The demonstrators raised slogans and demanded complete withdrawal of Indian troops from around the dargah. Meanwhile, repressive siege and search operations by the occupation forces continue unabated all across the valley. The mojahedin in retaliation attacked the Indian troops and killed three of them. Three mojahedin were martyred in a clash near Badgam. Three bullet-riddled bodies suspected to be killed by the Indian troops have been recovered in Kupwara.

CPI Criticizes U.S. for Pakistani Exercises

BK0801160894 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] The CPI [Communist Party of India] has criticized the United States for conducting joint armed exercises with Pakistan. In a press statement in New Delhi today, the party national executive said that the Clinton administration is only supporting militarist elements in Islamabad by this action. The party said that the U.S. by having exercises with Pakistan is lending direct support to the terrorists in the Kashmir valley. The party also criticized an anti-India letter to a Kashmiri separatist outfit by the American president.

Chinese Delegation Meets Congress-I Leaders

BK0901093894 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1615 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Mr. Wen Jiabao, an alternate member of the Politburo of the Chinese Communist Party, has said Beijing attaches utmost importance to develop friendly ties with India. Mr. Jiabao is heading an eight-member high-level delegation of the Chinese Communist Party. The delegation called on the vice president, Mr. K.R. Narayanan, in New Delhi today. Mr. Narayanan expressed satisfaction on the progress achieved in bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

The Chinese delegation also held discussions with Congress-I leaders. The delegation exchanged views with Congress-I leaders on strengthening cultural, economic, and political relationship between the two countries. Mr. V.N. Gadgil, Mr. R.L. Bhatia, and Mr. Shushil Kumar Shinde took part in the discussions.

PRC's Wen Jiabao Meets Narayanan

BK0801132494 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] A top leader of the Communist Party of China, Mr. Wen Jiabao, has said that Beijing attaches utmost importance to develop friendly ties with India on the basis of principles of pancasila [five principles of peaceful coexistence]. During his meeting with the vice president, Mr. K.R. Narayanan, in New Delhi today, Mr. Wen said China will continue on the path of socialist market economic system and concentrate on economic development. The visiting dignitary expressed the desire that India and China should maintain long-term, durable, and friendly ties.

Mr. Narayanan expressed satisfaction at the good progress achieved in the cooperation program in scientific, cultural, and other fields. He, however, underlined the need to import [as heard] a greater economic content to bilateral relations for further strengthening the very ancient and close relations.

Chinese Ambassador Reviews Ties With India

BK0801093694 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 3 Jan 94 p 24

[Text] New Delhi, Jan. 2 (PTI)—India and China will soon start talks on reducing troop-levels on both sides of the line of actual control (LAC) in pursuance of an agreement signed during the Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's visit to Beijing last September, Chinese ambassador Cheng Ruisheng, said in an interview here.

"Both sides may have already reduced some troops, but I am not aware of the facts. Both sides want to divert their resources from military to economic development," Mr Cheng said.

The Chinese ambassador said that an experts group of diplomats and military personnel, set up as part of the agreement on maintenance of peace and tranquillity along the LAC, would hold its first meeting in New Delhi next month.

He said the experts group would tackle the issue relating to the redeployment with a view to reduction in military forces in the areas along the LAC.

The experts group, which will have about 10 members from each side, shall advise the Foreign Secretary-level joint working group (JWG) on the resolution of differences between the two sides on the alignment of the line of actual control.

Replying to wide-ranging questions, Mr. Cheng said there was no Pakistan factor in China's development of relations with India.

Describing "stability and overall improvement" as the main characteristics of the Sino-Indian relations in 1993, he said if China used India or Pakistan as a card for developing bilateral relations, it would "complicate matters very much."

He emphasised that India and China had achieved a breakthrough in exchanges in the military field.

The visit of the Chinese vice chief of Army staff to India last month came after a gap of over 30 years. Like-wise, the Chinese naval ships visited Bombay nearly after 40 years.

India and China had problems in 1962 but that was part of history now. "We are trying to catch up with the lost time," the Chinese envoy said.

He emphasised that there was no such gap in the development of China's relations with Pakistan.

Mr. Cheng agreed with the questioner that the human rights issue was being exploited by the west.

The Chinese envoy said India and China had identical views on the human rights issue.

"We are of the opinion that differences on the human rights issue should not be linked with bilateral relations including trade or economic ties," he said.

Replying to a question on the nuclear issue, Mr. Cheng referred to differing perceptions between India and China.

China had already signed the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. India was not prepared to do the same, he observed.

Mr. Cheng said his country was in favour of a nuclear weapons free zone in South Asia as there was no nuclear power in the region.

China, he said, felt that the two major world powers should reduce their nuclear weapons.

Asked about the Chinese military assistance to Pakistan, he said this did not pose any threat to India.

He made the point that China was involved in commercial sales of military hardware and India could also be a buyer if it so desired.

Bilateral Aviation Project Planned With PRC

BK1001093894 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] India and China are planning to jointly manufacture commercial aircraft. Feasibility studies are now on to make planes with the capacity [of] up to 100 seats. The Chinese ambassador, Mr. Cheng Ruisheng, told PTI in New Delhi that the two countries proposed to pool their technological and other resources for the project. The studies are to be undertaken by experts of the National Aeronautical Laboratory and the Aerotechnology Research Institute of China. Mr. Cheng said both India and China have good military planes and they can diversify the capability to the civilian side. As the two countries are carrying out economic reforms, they will also be able to acquire better technology for the project, he said. The ambassador also felt that there is great scope for stepping up bilateral trade as it accounts for just 1 percent of India's foreign trade. He said China is trying to introduce Indian technical know-how in the computer field and is interested in launching Indian satellites which will be cheaper than other European launchers.

Official Promises 'Superior' Cryogenic Engine

BK0901094294 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0435 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] The chairman of the Indian Space Research Organization, Dr. U.R. Rao, has expressed confidence that India will be able to develop its cryogenic engine latest by 1998. He was addressing a press conference at Jaipur. Mr. Rao said the indigenous technology will be superior to the present ones available in the world.

According to him, the next launch of the Indian Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle will take place within four to five months.

Minister Speaks of 'Gains' of GATT Accord

BK0801041294 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] The commerce minister, Mr. Pranab Kumar Mukherji, says the gains outweigh the likely disadvantages following the acceptance of the agreement on GATT talks. Speaking on the Dunkel proposals in Calcutta, he said multilateral arrangements widen the scope for trade. Mr. Mukherji said that subsidies given to farmers will not be discontinued as a result of the new agreement.

'Heightened Level of Insurgency' Viewed

BK0901130994 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 29 Dec 93 p 8

[Editorial: "Foreign Hand in NE"]

[Text] Army spokesmen have painted a very disturbing picture of the state of insurgency in the North-East. According to Lt. Gen Niranjan S. Malik who has been briefing the press, insurgent groups particularly in trouble-torn Nagaland and Manipur, are better armed and more militant than ever before. Bomb blasts, assassination attempts and 'genocide', he reportedly said, have become the order of the day. The escalation in insurgent activity is ascribed to various factors. The most serious of them is the patronage of foreign agencies. Although it has long been suspected that some rebel groups have been assisted by Bangladesh and Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence [ISI] agency, this is probably the first time that the seniormost army officer in the region has said as much. He claimed to have definite knowledge of other sources of foreign aid to the rebels as well.

Malik specifically named the Muivah-Swu faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-M) as a beneficiary in this context. The ISI is said to have launched a new organisation called the United Liberation Front of Seven Sisters in which the NSCN(M), the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), the Bodo Security Force and other tribal groups are key participants. Just as disquieting was the revelation that the banned NSCN(M) which has emerged as one of the most formidable outfits in the North-East was recruiting immigrant Muslims. In the army's perception, the NSCN(M) has received a major psychological boost by being admitted as a member of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation based at the Hague and apparently gets financial assistance from it as well as from the American Baptist Church. All this has encouraged insurgent leaders on the one hand to believe that their cause has received international recognition and on the other to acquire arms and ammunition more easily. Last but not least, army officers say that the Nagaland police force has been grossly negligent in allowing its weapons to fall into the hands of underground groups.

In this grim backdrop some comfort may be drawn from the fact of the doubling of security forces and army units deployed in the North-East since October 1. However, the army briefing raises crucial questions about the overall strategy being pursued by the Central Government in dealing with what appears to be a heightened level of insurgency. Clearly, if the army assessment of the situation is accepted, anti-insurgency operations will have to be stepped up especially in border areas. But this should not preclude political measures among which should be steps to stabilise and improve the functioning of the governments of Nagaland and Manipur. They will have to become both more responsive to popular aspirations and firm in dealing with troublemakers than they have proved so far to be.

Iran

Khamene'i Speaks on Anniversary of Revolution

LD0901174094 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] On the occasion of God's day of 19 Dey, the anniversary of the bloody uprising staged by the people of Qom, which marked the start of the Islamic revolution, a large group of students and clergy from Qom seminary and various strata of the people from this city, met this evening with the leader of the Islamic revolution Ayatollah Khamene'i.

In the course of this meeting, the esteemed leader offered congratulations to the world Muslims and the proud nation of Iran on the eve of mission of the last of the prophets, Muhammad son of 'Abdallah, may God's peace and salutations be upon him and his scion.

His eminence referred to events of 19 Dey 1356 [9 January 1978] as the beginning of a great development, which led to the destruction of the monarchy in Iran, shook America and the reactionary regimes, and established an Islamic government.

Ayatollah Khamene'i described each event of the Islamic revolution's 15-year history as a great lesson for the Muslim nation of Iran and said: The independent and liberated Iranian nation is fully aware and is armed with ample valuable experience gained during the war and the life of the Islamic Republic of Iran; thanks to this experience, no power and no government would dare enter the arena of a military conflict against the iron-clenched fist of our nation.

The leader of the Islamic revolution drew attention of the Iranian nation to the conspiracy hatched by the enemies of Islam to create discord, to undermine the people's solidarity and unity, and to promote suspicion among the people vis-a-vis the state authorities and the Islamic regime, and added: Today any speech or written words, and any move, which might create doubt among the Iranian nation about its last proud 15 years, the era of his eminence Imam [Khomeyni]—may God be satisfied with his deeds—about the performance of the authorities, and about the stances and the course of the revolution, would serve the

particular interests of the enemy. Every individual must vigilantly watch for the enemy's conspiracies and enticements.

Referring to the pressure exerted on the European governments by America to win their support in the confrontation against Iran, the esteemed leader said: As the ringleader of arrogance, America has pleaded with the European governments to refrain from commercial transactions with Iran and from the sale of commodities, which the Iranian nation needs to rebuild the country, but the big European governments, which enjoy common sense and realize the importance of Iran and its regime, have rejected U.S. demands and ignored its enticement.

Referring to the claim that the faith, the sincere sentiments, and the revolutionary fervor of the Iranian nation have subsided, Ayatollah Khamene'i termed the claim as a vague imagination and added: The Iranian nation is a revolutionary nation and will never sever its ties with the revolution. Thanks to divine assistance, this revolution will bring such prosperity to this nation's life and after-life, that it will become an example to other nations. However, the realization of this important matter requires our endeavor, patience, cooperation, solidarity, sympathy, and our ability to recognize the enemy.

Ayatollah Khamene'i described the magnification of Iran's internal difficulties as a propaganda ploy employed by the enemy with the objective of creating despondency and despair among the people.

In conclusion, stressing the need for confronting the enemy's enticement of doom and gloom, Ayatollah Khamene'i called upon every level of the people to perform their duties properly and sincerely in whatever job they are doing.

Finance Minister on Economic Affairs

LD0801182694 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Morteza Mohammad-Khani, the minister of finance and economic affairs, in a news conference today elaborated on the main economic indicators and implementation problems of the First Development Plan.

According to a report by the Central News Unit, he considered the trend of the movement of the state economy as being towards a planned economy, and he described the advances of the state economy as outstanding during the first state economic, social, and cultural development plan, and he said: During the years when the First Development Plan was being implemented, while the international economy was facing a recession we were one of the five countries which advanced its economy at a relatively high percentage.

He said: While in 1993 the world economic growth has been estimated to be 1.2 percent, our economy in the current year [Iranian year beginning 21 March 1993] has enjoyed a growth of 7.7 percent.

On investment in various economic sectors, the minister of finance and economic affairs said: During the First Plan we spent more than one third of our foreign currency earnings on investment in development plans and production projects. Ninety percent of our debts are connected with that type of investment. He pointed out that more than 50 percent of the state foreign currency earnings during the years when the First Plan was being implemented were used up on investments in development projects.

In the field of the domestic GNP, Mohammad-Khani said: In 1367 [year beginning 21 March 1988] the GNP was 7 percent. It reached 14 percent in 1371.

He continued: On average the added value [as heard] in the agricultural sector during the period of the First Plan grew by 5.9 percent. That is 0.3 percent more than envisaged in the plan so that the volume of the added value of the sector compared to the beginning of the plan has increased four fold.

Announcing that non-oil exports grew by 28.7 percent in the First Plan period, he described one of the most important objectives of the First Plan to be replacing imports. He recalled the role of non-oil exports in reducing the state foreign currency requirements and said: At the moment the increase in domestic products in the field of oil refining, petrochemical, intermediate, and consumer industries is satisfactory so that our domestic products have grown to such an extent that they can reduce the country's foreign currency requirements to one third of those in 1367. That indicates the success of the economic move in that field.

The finance and economic affairs minister said that the forecast in the First Plan for the annual growth rate of the public sector spending was 24.4 percent and added: Nevertheless the forecast of the public sector spending growth rate in the Second Development Plan amounts to 43.2 percent. The reason for that is the growth of the government's development expenses.

Referring to the high volume of investment in the production sector, the reduction of the state foreign currency requirements for importing capital-intensive goods as well as the arrangements made in the past few weeks to regulate the currency market, Mohammad-Khani considered the effect of oil price reductions in the trend of the state economic movement to be little.

He considered the combination of implemented policies in support of domestic products, creating employment, supporting the national currency and regulating the state economic structure as significant and said that at the moment inflation and consumerism are two of the worst of the country's fundamental problems. On inflation, Mohammad-Khani said: The rapid growth of the economic structure, international recession, population growth, and a tendency toward consumerism in the community, have beset the regulation and coordination of economic and social development with difficulties and directed the greater part of the pressure resulting from that growth toward the salaried stratum. Therefore the government is duty bound to pay more attention to reduce that pressure

on the vulnerable strata. The rate of inflation as well as the pressure on the low-income strata will be reduced through the start of commissioning production projects—in which investment has been made—as a result of increased supply, government support for vulnerable strata and a reform of the tax system.

Continuing, the finance and economic affairs minister said: the annual rate of consumption during the period of the First Plan was forecast to be 5 percent. We have now reached a figure of 10 percent. That is why it is necessary for the public and private sectors to act to reduce consumption and cooperate to adjust the state economic status. He added: One of the policies of the government in the First Plan was to pave the way for investment in the Second Plan in the private sector, and the government intends to bring about increased investor confidence by supporting domestic investments.

President's Remarks on Economy Criticized

NC0901194694 Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 26 Dec 94 p 2

[Unattributed commentary: "When Someone Else Foots the Bill..."]

[Text] Speaking to the heads of the country's universities and higher education institutions, Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that the government has acted very strongly in the First and Second Five-Year Plans and described as minimal the impact that the fluctuations in the world market and the drop in oil prices have on the country's infrastructural plans, adding that with the existence of efficient forces and thanks to economizing in foreign exchange in implementing the major development projects, we can continue to advance our development without the help of foreign exchange income.

The day after these remarks, Mas'ud Rowghani-Zanjani, who heads the Plan and Budget Organization, said in an interview: In order to free the country's economy from the recent fluctuations and in view of the drop in the oil income that was to finance infrastructural and development projects in the Second Plan, efforts are being made to find new sources (!) of investment and to increase the prices of services such as electricity, oil products, telecommunications, gas, and so on, and to meet in this way the financial needs for the implementation of infrastructural projects (!).

The president's remarks that the reduction in oil prices will not have any impact on our economy and that the country's development projects are not linked with our foreign exchange incomes are surprising, because even the most naive people in the country know that Iran is a single-product country that is extremely dependent on oil. This is so crystal clear that no facts and figures are necessary to prove it. In other words, the president's remarks are a big riddle: How can development projects be completed and infrastructural investments be made without any foreign exchange income?

But fortunately the head of the Plan and Budget Organization solved this riddle very quickly in his interview and clarified where the money to be spent is to come from. Of course, Mr. Rowghani-Zanjani did not clarify how new investments will be acquired and what the nature of these investments will be; and apparently there has been no mention of how investments from abroad are to be acquired in the Second Plan either. This comes at a time when the First Plan and the government's economic reform policies have been frustrated basically because of the failure to attract any foreign investment or foreign financial resources. Thus, if we discount his reference to acquiring new resources, we will see that the country's economic development will be paid for from the people's pocket. In other words, the gist of the remarks both by the president and by the head of the Plan and Budget Organization is the old adage that it is easy to be a big spender with other people's money.

Editorial Calls For End to 'Consumerism'

NC0901201694 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 2 Jan 94 pp 1, 16

[Mohammad Sarafraz editorial: "Believing in the West—The Major Problem"]

[Text] When looking at the country's major problems, we should try to identify the most significant of these problems and try to find a solution. Otherwise, we will not be able to solve even the most minor issues. The First Plan started with the slogan of more production and production in all fields. But in the end, we had unrestrained imports and foreign debts. Economic growth and development in various dimensions is laudable. But the issue is at what price we achieve all this.

1. We have definitely suffered from weak management of the country's financial resources. The officials at the Ministry of Economy and Financial Affairs, as well as at the Central Bank and the Plan and Budget Organization did not provide timely information on the country's foreign exchange debts and its massive purchases. As a result, we lacked correct management for repayment of the country's debts, and ultimately our bank credits decreased and their guarantees were not accepted. For purchases from abroad, a third party should ensure our bank guarantees, which would lead to a considerable rise in the prices of imported goods. Who is responsible for the losses that have been inflicted on the country? What is the role of the Majles?

2. The Ministry of Industries and the Ministry of Heavy Industries resorted to foreign purchases that were outside the framework of the Plan and thus placed heavy burdens on the shoulders of the country. Purchases on a usance [preceding word in English] basis are usually carried out when the buyer is sure that he can repay within a short period of time. Otherwise, the interest on what he owes increases considerably and thus makes problems twice as bad. Such purchases took place outside the Plan, which was approved by the Majles. These same industries received $33.5 billion in foreign exchange, which is more than they were authorized. And the interesting point is that this violation was coupled with other violations, such as using up resources in industries for consumer goods that were

outside the framework of the Plan instead of investing as was envisaged by the approved Plan. What is the duty of the Majles in relation with this?

Management weakness should be dealt with appropriately. But more important than this is the way such behavior is justified.

In justifying the excessive rise in consumerism and in consumer industries, the minister of industries said in an interview on 23 November 1993: "When a market and a free economy mechanism prevails, demand regulates supplies and the production or non-production of an item cannot be dictated." This comes at a time when we believe that "free economy" is what the Westerners have to say; but that we do not want to follow the West but the correct Islamic policy, as our society and system requires.

In the Islamic system, supply and demand is controlled. Starting from the government and moving down to the most ordinary citizen, everyone has to decrease demand and prevent waste. This is at a time when a weak approach to advertising has led to an unrestrained increase in consumerism in the country and when the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran too is playing a noteworthy part in encouraging consumerism.

The most important aspect of believing in the West is accepting the West's pattern; and we see this being manifested in the country's planning. Today we should accept the fact that technocrats and those whose plans do not have a religions basis are influential. What they are doing is to overshadow cultural and spiritual growth with consumerism and gaudiness and then blame the clergy and the system for the result of their efforts. The idea that the economy is a worldly issue and that we should lean on it to choose in which direction we want to move makes us to consider our efforts to achieve development and, more important yet, to achieve security to be contingent on astronomic loans from European countries. But even if we disregard the problems that stem from this type of outlook and only take into consideration the experiences of those countries that have tread this path, we will realize that we will not achieve what we want. But if we stop tying our hopes for economic development to the West and rely on our domestic resources, then we will definitely be able to achieve our objectives much more quickly. We should not forget that the main objective is to ensure social justice and to tend to the deprived masses of the country.

Commentary Views Clinton's 'Misuse' of Finances

LD0901135294 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1102 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] These days the debate on Clinton's financial misuse is escalating in the U.S. press and in Congress. Recently one of America's most important newspapers warned that the suspicious financial dealings of President Bill Clinton and his wife have taken away the people's confidence in the White House statesmen. Last week, the U.S. Congress Republican leaders called for an investigation into President Clinton's role in land and estate deals in Arkansas. Republican leaders called on U.S. Attorney-General Janet Reno to appoint a special investigator to look into Clinton's role—as governor of Arkansas—in the Whitewater development company.

Critics of the U.S. President's financial misuse say that before becoming president, when Clinton was governor of Arkansas, he put special government treasury facilities at the disposal of the Whitewater company, of which he was a main shareholder. That finally resulted in the government losing $60 million. But the difficulty is that the judiciary must appoint a special investigator. The attorney-general is in open collaboration with the White House and so far has procrastinated in appointing a special investigator to look into the scandal. Her pretext is that the legal period for implementing the law concerning the appointment of a special investigator by the judiciary has expired; whereas the U.S. press say that she has other legal authority for a close examination of the issue. The collusion between the judiciary—which carries out justice—and the executive power indicates that both powers are trying hard to erase the ignominy of this obvious scandal from the face of the U.S. President.

The White House earlier announced that as soon as the numerous documents concerning Clinton's banking, personal, and electoral files are bound they will be handed over to the attorney-general's office. Clinton, under increasing political pressure two weeks ago, announced that he will be handing over documents concerning the financial connection between himself and his wife and the Whitewater company in the state of Arkansas to the attorney-general's office. But so far he has not handed them over.

Finally, we point out the fact that U.S. society has always been faced with such scandals at the level of political administrative authorities. The 1988 U.S. presidential candidate, Garry Hart, sometime after the revelations about his ethical scandal, said that the personal and private lives of the leaders of U.S. society have nothing to do with the people. Now it must be asked whether that is merely his point of view or the viewpoint of all U.S. statesmen and a permanent principle in U.S. diplomacy.

Commentary Views U.S.-Pakistani Military Moves

NC0801110994 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Commentary by News Research and Commentary Group]

[Text] According to news reports, the joint U.S.-Pakistani maneuvers have commenced in the mountainous areas of the [Northwest] Frontier Province. These maneuvers are significant in view of the fact that U.S.-Pakistani relations have entered a new phase after two years of tension.

Pakistan's location in the midst of three countries—India, Afghanistan, and Iran—and especially its proximity to the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf, and the Indian Ocean, has resulted in the United States attaching special importance to this country since its independence.

As a result of the communist coup d'etat in Afghanistan and the subsequent presence of Russian forces in the region, and in general a change in the political circumstances in southwest Asia, the United States sought to increase its financial and military assistance to the erstwhile Pakistani regime on the pretext of protecting its interests and combating the proliferation of communism. It was for this reason that until the end of General Ziaul Haq's tenure, Pakistan was transformed into the third largest recipient of U.S. assistance.

However, with the lapse of a few years of a continued distinctive regional strategy in southwest Asia, the advent of certain conditions such as the departure of Russian forces from Afghanistan and the establishment of an independent government in Pakistan, as well as the end of the Cold War era, the United States adopted a new stance on its relations with Pakistan. Thus, the importance of Pakistan waned in the U.S. political arena.

With the emergence of such developments, Washington sought to bring the military capability of Pakistan in its capacity as a powerful Islamic country under control. For this purpose, it strove to mobilize world public opinion against Pakistan's nuclear capability. Simultaneously, it severed its financial and military assistance to Pakistan.

During the past one or two months, the two countries have taken steps to improve relations. Earlier, with the suspension of its assistance to Pakistan, the United States could not persuade Islamabad to relinquish its nuclear program and Islamabad, which had distanced itself from the United States by a change in its foreign policy, sought to get closer to other countries, particularly European countries. The vacuum resulting from the halt of U.S. financial and military assistance was filled by European and non-European countries.

As an example, Pakistani experts have investigated British-manufactured Tornado fighter planes, Mirage-2000 aircraft from France, and the Sukhoi-27 and 28 made by Russia on their technical aspects. Eventually, the United States, which imposed this embargo against Pakistan, lost the lucrative $85 million market of this country, which would have been of vital importance to the insolvent U.S. economy.

These strategic considerations motivated the United States to readjust its hostile policy toward Pakistan, and a month ago Clinton proposed a bill for Congressional approval that would allow the President to lift embargoes and resume relations with certain countries, including Pakistan, for strategic considerations. Following its approval, a politico-military delegation arrived in Islamabad to iron out differences. Of course, Pakistan was inclined to favor improving its relations with the United States as it is dependent [vabasteh] on the United States regarding its Armed Forces in general, and its Air Force in particular, and it is possible that any kind of tension in its relations with the United States would result in the weakening of its Armed Forces in comparison with those of India.

In any case, the joint maneuvers of these two countries, which are currently in progress, can be considered as part of the process of improving relations between them.

Ministry Calls For Extended Afghan Cease-Fire

LD0801171794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] The Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran has sent messages to the political and Jehadi leaders of Afghanistan, calling for an extension of the cease-fire. The cease-fire between the warring sides in Afghanistan came into effect at 0600 this morning in response to a request from the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has also called for the continuation of negotiations between the engaged parties toward ending the fighting.

Majles Speaker Condemns Vatican-Israeli Ties

LD0901114594 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Speaking in the open Majles session today, speaker Nateq Nuri referred to the establishment of relations between Vatican and the Zionist regime and the Pope's recognition of the regime. Nateq Nuri said: this act and the approval of crimes committed by the regime occupying al-Quds [Jerusalem] was expected, but the silence of the Christian community on the subject was not.

Referring to the Afghan civil war, Nuri said the recent events in Afghanistan reveal that Afghan leaders and ringleaders lack political maturity, which allows for foreign intervention and continued clashes.

Commentary Faults Vatican's 'Reward' to Israel

NC0901121894 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 30 Dec 93 p 20

[Unattributed commentary: "The Christians' Reward to the Zionists!"]

[Text] On the basis of a joint communique that was issued yesterday by Israel and the Vatican, an initial agreement on establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries was approved. This agreement is to be signed today in Jerusalem by both sides.

The establishment of relations between the Vatican and the Israeli regime is actually an about-face by the Christian world, which is symbolized by the Vatican, who has suddenly ignored all its principles and values and a holy place

that is under the occupation of Zionist usurpers has been handed over on a silver platter to them on behalf of all the Christians of the world.

The Pope, as the leader of the Catholic Church in the world and who has rewarded the Zionists for the crimes they have perpetrated and for their occupation, should be asked by all the Christians of the world and by all mankind: Will the noble Christians of the world allow the Vatican to reward the Zionist traitors and criminals?

The Zionist groups in the United States and the Western countries have placed the Vatican under pressure to compromise with the Israeli regime. But this will only lead to further discord and disagreement in Europe and will definitely give rise to insecurity and protests there. Pious Christians will never agree to this compromise. The Christians of the world should prove that this is not a reward by the Christian world to the Zionists, but a reward that has been handed out by the corrupt club of the powerful who rule the West.

Commentary Views PLO-Jordanian Cooperation Talks

NC0801101694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Commentary by News Research and Commentary Group]

[Text] Three days of intensive talks between the representatives of the PLO headed by Faruq Qaddumi, the head of the PLO political bureau, and the Jordanian delegation headed by Deputy Prime Minister Sa'id al-Tall in Amman concluded with the signing of a joint communique by the two sides yesterday.

This communique specifies all the areas of cooperation in political, economic, and security matters between Jordan and Palestine following the establishment of Palestinian rule under the Gaza-Jericho autonomy accord. The implementation of a major part of the elements depends on the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho accord, which is now rather ambiguous as a result of differences between the PLO and Israel.

With this accord, Jordan has consolidated its future position in the autonomous regions. Recently, as a result of an agreement between Jordan and Israel, Jordanian banks are seeking to resume activities in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. The activities of these banks had been suspended following the usurpation of these areas in the six-day Arab-Israeli war in 1967. Besides, the Jordanian dinar is currently circulating in these areas alongside the Zionist regime's currency, the shekel. In view of the fact that one-third of Jordanian currency is circulating in these areas, Amman does not wish to relinquish this sector of its economic activity.

The consolidation of the Jordanian dinar and the banking activities of this country in the occupied areas of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip has been affirmed with the signing of this agreement. In conjunction with economic agreements, committees on the issues of Jerusalem, refugees, homeless persons, security, borders, and social affairs have been envisaged in this agreement. PLO-Jordanian talks commenced a few days after King Husayn's vehement criticism of 'Arafat and the PLO. King Husayn described these talks as the last chance for coordination of relations between Palestine and Jordan.

Political observers believe that Jordan's insistence on this agreement stems from numerous factors, most importantly that Jordan is concerned that 'Arafat is giving preference to coordination and cooperation with Israel even at the expense of adversely affecting cooperation with Jordan. In view of the considerable number of Palestinians living in Jordan, which exceeds half of the country's population, Jordan is greatly affected by these developments. In fact, 'Arafat's regional cooperation with Israel undermines Jordan's historical role. What is interesting in this matter is the regional rivalry over the economic future of autonomous Gaza and Jericho without any clear picture of the actual situation.

Commentary Views Beirut Explosion

NC0901164294 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 26 Dec 94 p 12

[Hasan Fathi commentary: "The Beirut Explosion: A Blow to Peace"]

[Excerpts] At a time when the political situation in Lebanon is tense because of differences between President Ilyas al-Hirawi and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, a truck loaded with 250 kg of explosives was blown up in al-Sayfi region in East Beirut near the Phalangist Party headquarters killing three and wounding 200. [passage omitted]

In regard to this incident, the Lebanese defense minister said that this was not an act only against the Phalangist Party but against Lebanon's security and tranquility as well. Almost all the parties, groups, and personalities who condemned the explosion agreed that this incident has threatened peace in Lebanon and could lead to a fresh round of clashes from which Lebanon had been free for some time. In 1975 after the Phalangists' attack on a bus carrying Palestinians in 'Ayn al-Rummanah region in Beirut, Lebanon became the scene of a civil war that lasted for 15 years. This war, which put the Phalangists on one side and Palestinian, national, and Islamic groups on the other, paved the way for Syrian and Israeli interventions in Lebanon, so much so that Israel attacked Lebanon several times and ultimately occupied part of southern Lebanon, which continues to be occupied by Israel and its allies.

The Syrian forces which came to Lebanon as peacekeeping forces now control the pulse of the country's affairs, and the Lebanese Government is unable to make any decisions without their being confirmed and approved in Damascus. [passage omitted]

The explosion at the Phalangist Party headquarters has given rise to the fear that the situation will once again

change and that clashes will once again resume precisely at a time when all efforts are being aimed at preventing such clashes, since none of the parties or groups want to see the situation return to what it was before.

Efforts To Link Iran to Lockerbie Faulted

NC0901180594 Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 26 Dec 94 p 2

[Unattributed commentary: "Future Efforts"]

[Excerpts] Five years after the crash of a Pan American airliner over Lockerbie, Scotland, the Zionist-influenced mass media has started fresh efforts to involve Iran in the issue.

The most important document that the Western mass media refers to is based on former American spy Lester Coleman's allegations that since former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher implies in her book of memoirs that Libya is innocent, therefore Iran is the main culprit in the explosion. [passage omitted]

In weaving their tale, the Western press also alleges that since the condenser on the time bomb used on the Pan American aircraft was similar to a condenser that was sold to East Germany by a Swiss company in 1985—three years before the Lockerbie explosion—and since Ahmad Jibril—whom they believe to be responsible for the crash—had good relations with East Germany, Iran, and Syria, therefore Tehran and Damascus are directly involved in the incident. [passage omitted]

On the basis of Zionist propaganda, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Syria are the main elements behind the American plane crash; and according to this propaganda, the reason why Iran and Syria have not been prosecuted as the main culprits so far is because this has not been deemed politically advisable because the United States needed Syria in the war against Iraq and it now needs Syria to advance the Middle East peace plan. Therefore, this is why only Libya was the target of American anger and UN sanctions. [passage omitted]

Political observers believe that the current propaganda is directly linked with the Islamic Republic's defense of the aspirations of the Palestinian people and that the fresh Zionist propaganda against Iran after a five-year silence should be discussed within the context of the intensification of the Palestinian people's struggles and the continuation of the Intifadah in the occupied territories.

The United States and world Zionism have always considered Iran to be the main obstacle to the Middle East peace talks. Also, the United States considers its major regional policy to be the isolation of Iran and the portrayal of an ugly and harsh face of Iran so that the way can be paved for isolating Iran on the one hand and for perpetrating numerous crimes on the other, especially when one analyzes the downing of the Iranian passenger plane over the Persian Gulf. [passage omitted]

Apparently the Americans intend to pave the way for more instigations in the region through the contrivance of their agents. But the American statesmen should not forget the disgrace they have suffered in Somalia.

Visiting Russian Envoy on Karabakh Crisis

LD0801205694 Tehran IRNA in English 2022 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 8, IRNA—Russia's Special Envoy for Karabakh Affairs, Vladimir Kazimirov, here today met with a senior Iranian to discuss current regional condition and the ways and means to end Karabakh crisis.

Kazimirov, who arrived here Thursday [6 January], briefed Director General of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Caucasus Affairs Department at the Foreign Ministry, Morteza Bank, on the measures taken by his country to end Karabakh crisis.

He underscored the role the regional countries and Minsk Group as well as the European Cooperation and Security Conference can play in ending the Karabakh issue.

Bank said in return that Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to intensify its efforts to put an end to war in Karabakh enclave.

Chabahar Ready To Transit Goods to Central Asia

LD0901114794 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] The general director of the Chabahar free trade zone announced that this free port is prepared to transit goods for Central Asian countries. Presently the port's various dock's have the capacity to handle one million [metric] tonnes of cargo a year, he said in an interview with reporters.

He called on Iranian capital holders and merchants who are active in Dubai, Abu Dubai, Sharjeh, Qatar, Oman, and Kuwait to visit the warehouses in Chabahar free port and to obtain their needs from this area, according to an IRNA report.

Referring to the actions of some investors in establishing trade offices and private warehouses in Chabahar, Mr Same'i said: There are no restrictions for trade, service, or industrial activity in the port and various economic activities in the region enjoy a 15- year tax exemption.

He added: The import of raw materials, machinery, and other authorized commodities is permitted to the region and the zone's regulations allow easy regional investment.

Visiting Mozambique Minister Seeks Expanded Ties

LD0801172694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 8 Jan 94

[Text] Mr. John William Kachamila, Mozambique's minister of mineral resources, who is carrying a message by his country's president for President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, today met with First Vice President Hasan Habibi and called for the expansion of economic, industrial, political, and cultural relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In turn, Habibi expressed satisfaction over the success of the struggle of African nations against racism and said: The just struggle of the African people, particularly in the south, against racism has always been supported by Iran and now that there is a gradual solution to this internationally shameful problem in South Africa, we support the process of stability and peace in the region.

The first vice president said the presence of the African nation of Mozambique in the Islamic Conference Organization was useful in creating better understanding between African and Islamic nations, and stressed the need for an exchange of views and experiences between the officials of the two countries aimed at expanding relations in various fields.

Discusses Relations With Velayati

LD0901120994 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Velayati, in a meeting today with the Mozambique minister of mineral resources, stressed that relations between the two countries will speed up from now on.

Referring to Iran's experience in professional and technical training, Velayati hoped that Iran will be able to play a more effective role in training the labor force needed by Mozambique.

The minister of mineral resources of Mozambique said his talks with Iranian officials were constructive, and stressed the need for bilateral relations, and called for the reopening of his embassy in Tehran.

Majles Speaker on 'Cultural Onslaught'

LD0901121294 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] In a meeting today with the minister of culture and Islamic guidance, a group of directors general, and the head of the [Majles] commission on culture and Islamic guidance, Majles Speaker Nateq Nuri stressed the struggle against the cultural onslaught. He said: This struggle is not limited to confrontation with the manifestations of Western culture. There should be various cultural activities to improve public culture and perceptions. At the same time there should be plans to end manifestations of corruption and those who insist on these matters should be confronted.

In another part of his speech, the Majles speaker praised the constructive actions of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance in establishing cultural and artistic centers at mosques. He said: This is one of the best ways of confronting the cultural onslaught.

Nateq Nuri said cultural activities include the establishment of libraries in various areas, particularly at mosques, as well as the constructive role of radio and television in broadcasting entertaining variety programs and sound films to provide for the recreation of people, particularly young people.

He announced that the Majles is prepared to cooperate and to solve any legal vacuum in the country's cultural sector.

Over 2,300 Sentences Pardoned, Commuted

LD0901191694 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1730 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Excerpt] On the eve of the auspicious anniversary of the great prophetic mission of the last of the prophets, Muhammad son of 'Abdallah, may God's peace and salutations be upon him and his scion, the great leader of the Islamic revolution His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i subjected 2,389 people to Islamic mercy and clemency by pardoning or commuting their sentences. The said individuals had been tried by the Islamic revolution courts, public courts, and military tribunals all over the country.

The leader of the Islamic revolution agreed with pardoning or commuting sentences of the said individuals following a request by Mr. Yazdi, the head of the judicial authority. [passage omitted]

Pakistan

Bosnian Prime Minister Silajdzic Arrives 9 Jan

BK0901103294 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0600 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Bosnia-Herzegovina Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic arrived in Islamabad this morning on a three-day visit to Pakistan. Talking to newsmen at the airport, Silajdzic criticized the international community for failing to play an effective role in ending the Serb and Croat aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina. He urged the international community to either act effectively to defend the Bosnian Muslims or allow them to defend themselves. He also called for an end to the arms embargo against Bosnia, which he described as illegal. He said the arms embargo against his country has caused the massacre of 200,000 Muslims. Silajdzic said renewed shelling and bombing by the Serb and Croat forces of Sarajevo and other cities has seriously hurt the process of

restoring peace in Bosnia. He said Bosnia-Herzegovina is trying to restore peace, but the siege of Sarajevo is hampering this process.

Silajdzic praised Pakistan's role in the Bosnian crisis and its continued support for the Muslim people of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

During his stay in Pakistan, Silajdzic will call on President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari and meet with Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

Meets President Leghari

BK0901113894 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] The president, Sardar Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari, has said that Pakistan will continue to support the cause of the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina at all forums in all possible manners. He was talking to the Bosnian prime minister, Mr. Haris Silajdzic, who called on him in Islamabad today. During the meeting, the president conveyed to the Bosnian prime minister deep anguish of the people and government of Pakistan over the continuing aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina. Mr. Haris Silajdzic thanked the president for Pakistan's support to the people of Bosnia for which, he said, his nation will remain eternally grateful. He briefed the president about the latest situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina, particularly highlighting the problems created by the continuing arms embargo against it.

Later, the president hosted a luncheon in honor of the Bosnian prime minister. It was attended, among others, by the chairman of the Senarte, Mr. Wasim Sajjad, Minister for Production retired Brigadier Mohammad Asghar and members of the diplomatic corps.

Bhutto, Silajdzic Comment

BK1001154694 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] The prime minister, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, has termed the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia-Herzegovina as a terrible stain on the conscience of mankind and urged the world community to focus their attention on the plight and suffering of the Bosnian people. She was addressing a joint news conference along with the visiting prime minister of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Dr. Haris Silajdzic, in Karachi today. The prime minister in her statement said:

[Begin Bhutto recording] [Words indistinct] we feel strongly about Bosnia, not only because we are Muslims. We feel strongly about Bosnia because we believe in freedom, we believe in human rights, and we believe in the sanctity of life. The rape of Bosnian women, the death of Bosnian men, the plight of Bosnian orphanages [as heard] is not just the rape of Bosnia, of the killings in Bosnia, of the plight of the children of Bosnia. It is indeed the rape of the world's conscience, the killing of the world's conscience, and it is a common plight of the world itself. I would like to take advantage of the visit of the prime minister of Bosnia to assure him that Pakistan stands fully behind his government and it's efforts to end the killing in Bosnia and the suffering of the people of Bosnia. We are prepared to assist in every effort within Pakistan and without at international forums to bring an end to what we call a stain on the conscience of mankind. [end recording]

Speaking at the news conference, the Bosnian prime minister said:

[Begin Silajdzic recording] I am certain that Pakistani Government will continue supporting us at bilateral and international forums. Pakistan is a prominent supporter of our cause in the United Nations, in the Organization of Islamic Countries [as heard] and other international forums. A Pakistani is a member of the war crimes tribunal. And that is all shall the support of Pakistan to us. [sentence as heard] [end recording]

Earlier, when the prime minister of Bosnia flew into Karachi from Islamabad on the last leg of his three day's visit to Pakistan, he was received by the prime minister. Also present to receive the distinguished guest was the Sindh chief minister, Syed Abdullah Shah, and the defense minister, Mr. Aftab Shaban Mirani. Dr. Haris Silajdzic was then introduced to the speaker of the Sindh assembly, Mr. Ghaus Bux Meher; members of the Sindh cabinet; senior officials of the provincial government; and members of the diplomatic corps based in Karachi. The Bosnian prime minister was accompanied by the federal minister for law and parliamentary affairs, Syed Iqbal Haider, and ambassador of Bosnia in Pakistan, Mrs. Seljida. The Bosnian prime minister and Ms. Benazir Bhutto then proceeded to the VVIP [Very Very Important Person] room and had a brief exchange of views on the latest situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Silajdzic: Bhutto To Visit Bosnia

BK1001155494 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 10 Jan 94

[Text] The prime ministers of Pakistan and Turkey will visit Bosnia-Herzegovina on 2 February to express their solidarity with the oppressed people of Bosnia. This was stated by the Bosnian prime minister while talking to newsmen after his talks with Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in Karachi this evening. The Bosnian prime minister said we attach great importance to this visit, because it is taking place at a time when we need to mobilize the international public opinion in favor of our just stand.

Government, UN Respond to Afghan Refugees

BK0901161894 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] Thousands of people have left Kabul for safer places, and fresh fighting has erupted there after a 30-hour cease-fire. Radio Pakistan's Peshawar correspondent reports that about 5,000 Afghan nationals have crossed over to Pakistan since the fighting erupted on New Year's Day. More than 60 diplomats and UN mission personnel arrived in Peshawar before the latest

resumption of fighting. These diplomats belong to Saudi Arabia, Iran, Libya, Turkey, India, Sudan, and Somalia. They have temporarily closed their missions in Kabul. At least 15,000 have fled Kabul during the cease-fire to take shelter in Jalalabad. The influx of more people into Jalalabad continues.

A spokesman of Afghanistan's Nigrar-e Jehad-e Shura told the Radio Pakistan correspondent that arrangements are being made to settle refugees in camps near Jalalabad. He said the Pakistan Government has sent food and other items for the settlement. An emergency meeting presided over by the UN High Commission for Refugees was held in Peshawar, and reviewed the settlement arrangements of the new refugees. The meeting was told that teams have been sent to Jalalabad to assess the needs of the refugees. The meeting, which was attended by officials of the UN High Commission for Refugees, was told that the Pakistan Government will extend all possible help to the non-governmental agencies to send essential items to Jalalabad.

Meanwhile, reports from Kabul say Fort Bala Hissar and the Microryan District are centers of the latest fighting. These are the strongholds of the forces under General Abdul Rashid Dostam. Two people were killed while fleeing Microryan on bicycles when they tried to cross a bridge separating the warring factions.

Minister Explains Role of Troops in Somalia

BK0901164294 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 9 Jan 94

[Text] The interior minister, retired Major General Nasirullah Khan Babar, informed the Senate today that Pakistani troops have been sent to Somalia in accordance with the UN resolutions to restore peace and food supplies in that country. He was speaking on the admissibility of two identical adjournment motions sought to be moved by Professor Khurshid Ahmed and Syed Safi Iqbal about sending of additional troops to Somalia. He clarified that Pakistani forces are part of the United Nations peacekeeping force. They are performing a humanitarian task in Somalia and would come back as soon as this task has been completed.

The interior minister said Pakistan wants to play a historic role for peace in the world under UN mandate. The minister said Pakistan is also sending troops to Haiti to supervise elections. Pakistan has also expressed its willingness to send troops to Bosnia if asked by the United Nations.

The chairman ruled the motion out of order.

More Troops Heading to Somalia

BK1001101194 Islamabad THE NATION in English 10 Jan 94 pp 1,4

[Excerpt] Islamabad—Federal Interior Minister Maj. General (Retd) [Retired] Naseerullah Babar admitted on Sunday [9 January] that Pakistan was sending 2,500 troops in addition to the 5,000 already in Somalia "for restoring peace and food supply in strife-torn brotherly country."

He was responding to identical adjournment motions moved by Prof. Khursheed and Fasih Iqbal on Sunday. The General categorically said, "our troops have been sent to Somalia in accordance with the United Nation [as published] resolutions."

Speaking on the admissibility of the motion, the Minister said that because of the peace keeping operation peace had been restored to a great extent in Somalia apart from regular food supplies. "We want to play an historic role in peace-keeping under the UN mandate," he said proudly.

He dispelled the impression that the Pakistan forces were under the US command. "They are part of the UN peace keeping force. I am proud to say that our troops are performing a humanitarian task in Somalia and would come back as soon as this task is accomplished."

He informed the House that Pakistan was also sending troops to Haiti to monitor elections. Pakistan had also expressed its willingness to send troops in Bosnia if asked by the UN.

Earlier, Prof Khurshid, speaking on the motion, apprehending that Pakistan was being instrumental in watching US interests. He said the US was exceeding from the mandate it was given by the UN. "The Americans want to maintain hegemony in African countries like Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya.

He expressed his sorrow over the martyrdom of 33 Pakistani soldiers recently, saying, "It's all for US interests." [passage omitted]

Bhutto's Trip to PRC, DPRK Reviewed

BK0801115294 Karachi DAWN in English 8 Jan 94 p 13

[By Shameem Akhtar: "Benazir's Journey to the East"]

[Text] Benazir's journey to the East—China and North Korea—against the backdrop of sanctions against Pakistan and the People's Republic of China and Washington's siege of the DPRK has regional and global significance. The three have outrightly rejected hegemonism and have given expression to their shared perception of an international order based on respect for sovereign equality of all states, non-intervention, peaceful co-existence, peaceful settlement of disputes.

With one voice Benazir, Li Peng and Kim Il-song denounced the political and economic domination of the developing countries by the big powers, and asked them to live and let others live. In fact, the above-named countries have been subjected to punitive diplomacy and blackmail by the US for the simple reason that they have embarked upon a path of independent economic development. Pakistan has been accused of having made the Islamic bomb, and DPRK a Marxist bomb while China has been charged with supplying 400-metre-range M-11 missiles to Pakistan.

Pakistan has offered to conclude the NPT [Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty] together with India. The DPRK has proposed the establishment of nuclear-weapons-free zone in the Korean peninsula, meaning the removal of 1000 nuclear and lethal weapons from there by the US. Further, it has to remove 48000 troops from South Korea, another 45000 troops from Japan and warships from the Korean waters. This Washington is not prepared to do and insists on Pyongyong's unconditional submission to the inspection by the so-called IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency] team of North Korea's two suspected nuclear sites. The row had taken a serious turn, with President Clinton threatening to bomb Pyongyong's nuclear installations. Benazir has sought to defuse the tension by lending support to the ongoing negotiations between the US and the DPRK at the United Nations, and pleading that non-proliferation should not be made a pretext for blocking the acquisition of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. Apparently, Pakistan's role has had some sobering influence on the adversaries.

Both Pakistan and China have categorically denied the M-11 missile deal amidst Washington's refrain that Beijing had made the delivery to its neighbour. China has made it clear that it gives weapons for the recipient country's self-defiance [as published] only and not to create imbalance in South Asia. There is nothing clandestine about Pakistan-China arms transfer which began, it may be recalled, after the US stopped military assistance to Islamabad after the Sino-Soviet border agreement in 1963. In December 1989 the two neighbours reached an agreement for cooperation in the production of arms and ammunition. Pakistan has to do something about its defence since Rajiv Gandhi did not respond to Benazir's proposal for a mutual balanced reduction of forces. Nor to her predecessor government's offer of no-war pact. India is ever after a deadlier weapons such as Agni, Prithvi, Akash missiles in addition to four rocket launchers given to it by Russia.

Benazir has been mobilising world opinion in favour of a judicious settlement of Kashmir where insurgency might spill over into neighbouring countries, triggering off a regional war in which Afghanistan and Iran may be embroiled at some stage similar to Muslim Ummah's involvement against Russians in Afghanistan. In the '60s and '70s, the People's Republic of China unreservedly back the solution of Kashmir problem on the basis of the UN-sponsored plebiscite. The Chinese President Jiang Zemin particularly mentioned that the Kashmir dispute was the main obstacle to the normalisation of relations between India and Pakistan.

At the same time the Chinese leaders avoided taking sides presumably because any partisan attitude on their part would deprive them of whatever influence they might bring to bear upon India by quiet diplomacy. Any offer of mediation by Beijing would not be acceptable to India which insists on bilateral negotiations. Astute diplomats as they are, the Chinese denied assuming any such role. It is by some semblance of even-handedness and nonpartisanship that Beijing can exercise a moderating influence on India. Certainly, China will never allow India to invade Pakistan, especially when the Soviet Union is no longer there to neutralise Beijing.

Kim Il-song has maintained his government's support to the settlement of Kashmir dispute on the basis of the will of the people expressed through an impartial referendum, a position adopted in consultation with Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto in 1976. Unlike China, the DPRK has no unresolved disputes with India and does not have to toe a cautious line. Therefore, Pyongyang's partisanship would not complicate the matter but add to the moral weight of Pakistan's stand.

Alone among the UN members Pakistan has stood by China on human rights issue as proclaimed by Benazir that her government shares Beijing's perception on that score. The United States has left no stone unturned in making pariah of China on the suppression of the West-inspired subversion at Tiananmen Square in June 1989. Day in and day out, the Western media keep playing up the so-called Tibetan separatism in a bid to fuel insurgency in China's Himalayan province while the British governor of the crown colony of Hong Kong is busy sowing the dragon's seed there which he calls representatives assembly. It is ridiculous—nay mischievous—to plant a state within state on the eve of the lapse of Britain's paramountcy in the region. Similarly, the Western powers have been arming Taiwan, a part of mainland China, to teeth so that that [illegible]y may resist reunion with the parent country.

Pakistan's Prime Minister has strongly opposed the Western designs on China's territorial integrity and endorsed its inalienable sovereign right to Tibet, Hong Kong and Taiwan, a gesture that was appreciated by the Chinese government and people. Pakistani leader underlined the need for strengthening that United Nations in order to enable it to contribute to the establishment of an international order based on justice. The nonaligned nations could effectively resist the hegemonistic and exploitative role of the big powers that impedes the emergence of global egalitarianism. But the NAM [Nonaligned Movement] has been stuck by paralysis in the post-cold war years.

The December 15 GATT document is discriminatory against the developing countries as it imposes an unequal trade regime on them all. More galling is the pusillanimous submission on the part of NAM which had been crying hoarse for market access in the developed world. India's half-hearted call for G-15 Summit to address the GATT met with equally half-hearted response. The summit could never meet. Nor was Narasimha Rao serious about countering the domineering North with whose multinationals he has been hobnobbing. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, India has been placating the imperialist-zionist lobby for a permanent seat in the Security Council. Whither NAM?

In this context the meeting of the leaders of Pakistan, China and the DPRK has been particularly significant in that they have been resisting attempted subjugation from armed plutocratic powers. At this critical juncture Kim Il-song's advice aimed at South-South cooperation is significant.

The great Korean leader argues that Asia is blessed with immense natural resources, *manpower*, technical know-how and experience. Given meaningful cooperation, all these could be turned to good account. The People's Republic of China and the DPRK are living examples of development through self- reliance. Pakistan has forged multiple economic, trade and technological links with the both and has been expanding the cooperation. Benazir has laid stress on energy, agriculture and irrigation where Chinese assistance is urgently required. She has invited the Chinese entrepreneurs to invest in Pakistan where the government's economic reforms and new financing modes will facilitate joint ventures in collaboration with local investors.

Five accords were signed:

(1) bilateral cooperation in science and technology, (2) transport, (3) twinning of Punjab and Xian provinces, (4) border trade agreement which raised the volume of such trade to 2 million Yuan, and (5) an 80-million-yuan soft loan to Pakistan. China has helped Pakistan set up heavy mechanical complex, heavy forge foundry and aircraft rebuild factory. It is about time that attention was paid to light industry in private sector on the basis of joint ventures. This was agreed at a meeting of the 6-member Chinese delegation led by Zeng Xianlin, Minister for Light Industry and Pakistan's Minister of Production, Islam Nabi, at Islamabad in September '91. The Chinese official opined that light industry could be established with small capital and fetch foreign exchange which in turn could be invested in defence sector.

Among the areas identified for the purpose are the manufacturing of electrical fans, air-conditioners, electrical equipments, auto-bicycles, elevators, hand-operated deep well pumps and food processing. In addition to making Pakistan self-sufficient in engineering goods, the industry will create jobs. Some of these products could be exported to China, thereby reducing Pakistan's trade deficit. In 1991, China exported goods to Pakistan amounting to US$598 million while Pakistan's export was mere US$89.2 million. The balance is more or less the same at present. Improved communication links and exchange of visits by businessmen can promote trade via land route. It is a good news to the traders that both the governments have decided to repair and develop Karakoram Highway into an all-weather road.

Similarly, there exists great potential in promoting cooperation with the DPRK in trade and development. Already, Pyongyong has extended technical assistance in establishing hydro-power station in Azad Kashmir. It has offered to assist Pakistan in seismic-proof pre-fabricated housing, manufacture of generators and mining equipment. North Korea's long-standing offer to construct underground railway system to solve the nation's chronic mass transit problem must still be open if only we could avail of it. The DPRK will also buy chemical products from Pakistan.

These are examples of mutually advantageous economic and technical cooperation in bilateral relations among the states of the South. Pakistan, China and the DPRK have shown how states with differing political, social and economic systems, can work together in a rewarding fellowship.

Bomb Explodes Near City Courts in Karachi

BK0901130094 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 9 Jan 94 pp 1, 12

[Text] Karachi—At least ten people, including a sub-divisional magistrate [SDM], his guard and an army jawan [soldier], were injured and 28 vehicles damaged when a powerful time-device went off in the parking lot of the city courts Saturday [8 January]. The bomb was planted in a Vespa scooter parked near the office of the Deputy Commissioner, South.

Eyewitnesses said the police activity and presence of the mobile control room of the fire brigade in the court prior to the explosion showed that the administration had information about planting of the bomb.

"I was in the court stamp office around 12:15 pm when I heard a big explosion and felt as if the building was going to cave in and my ears kept buzzing for a few minutes", Nastz Rizwan, Advocate, told THE NEWS. He said after few seconds several other explosions of mild intensity were heard compelling him to remain in the office.

By the time three fire brigades reached the scene, most of the motorcycles had already been gutted. The splinters of the bomb as well as pieces of Vespa broke the window panes and went high to the top of a multi-storey building across the road.

"SDM airport, Iqbal Scomro, had arrived minutes before the explosion and was talking to chauffeur of the chief secretary when the explosion took place and we were hit by heavy objects", said guard of the SDM, Haider Abhas, at the Civil Hospital.

Ameer Abdullah, a policeman who was also injured, said he was going to the court after when the device exploded and an object hit at his right shoulder, "I fell unconscious and know nothing what happened later.", he said. Another injured Bahauddin, an aged Baloch, was hit by an heavy object while sitting behind the stamp office. He was sitting about half a furlong from the parking lot. His condition was stated to be unstable.

Other injured were identified as (Mumtazur) Rehman, an army personnel, Nasir Khan, Abdul Rehman, Taufeeq Moin, Mohammad Aslam, Mohammad Musaddiq and Abdul Rehman who were treated and discharged from the Civil Hospital.

The Incharge of the Bomb Disposal Service, Moinuddin, said: "It was 400 grams of Russian made TNT explosive covered with steel splinters and attached with a console timer of approximately 30-minute."

The timer was also Russian-made, but the current detonator could be home-made which was attached with a 9-volt battery, he added.

When asked DSP [Deputy Inspector of Police] Eidgah, Chaudhri Mohammad Ashraf, said: "The incident seems to be connected with the recent incident of Larkana." SDM Arambagh, Raeesuddin Piracha, who was also holding the charge of Eidgah Sub-Division, said hands of AZO [Al-Zulfiqar Organization) and RAW [Research and Analysis Wing] could not be ruled out.

The DIG [Deputy Inspector General] Karachi, Rahood Khan Brohi, however, said: "We cannot say anything as the matter was yet to be investigated. Special teams have been formed under the supervision of the area DSP [Deputy Superintendent of Police] which will be assisted by the CIA. [Crime Investigation Agency]"

He denied any arrest in this connection so far and said hopefully the investigators would reach a conclusion after the microscopic examination of the splinters and pieces of the Vespa.

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